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ON THE
INTERNATIONAL
LESSONS



1918



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PALESTINE

IN THE
TIME OF CHRIST

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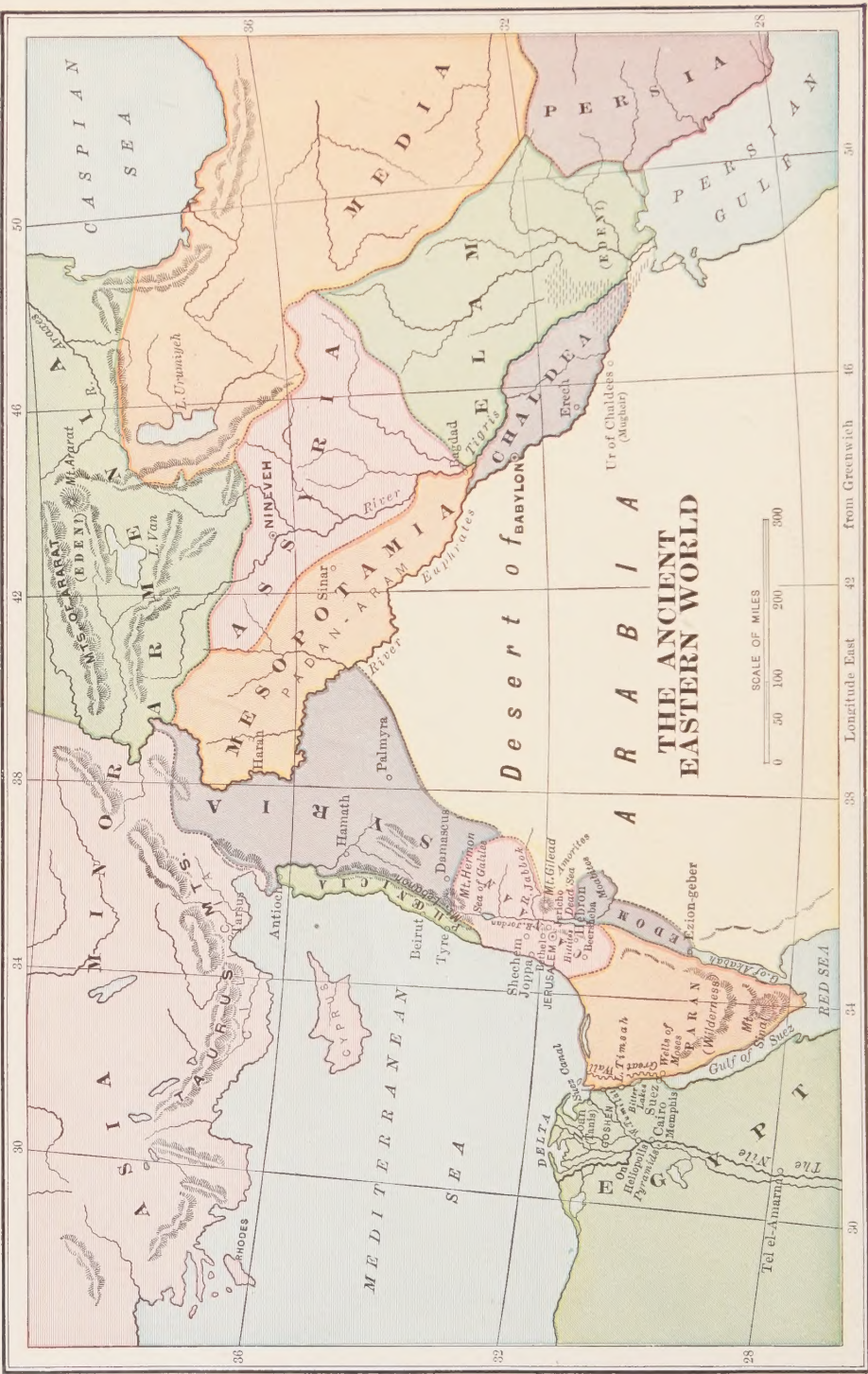
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PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES

ON THE

International Sunday School Lessons

IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES: COURSE FOR

1918.

Studies in Mark. January to June

THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD

Studies in the Christian Life. July to September

Studies in the Patriarchs. October to December

(CONTINUED IN THE FIRST MONTHS OF 1919)

THE BASIS FOR TEACHING ALL GRADES IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

With all that can aid the teacher in his own study and in teaching, such as

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Forty-fourth Annual Volume.

4434

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

TITLE	PAGE	1	PICTURES AS AN AID TO TEACHING	6
TABLE OF CONTENTS		2	MAP WORK FOR THE LESSONS	7
LIST OF LESSONS		2	OLD TASKS WITH A NEW SPIRIT	7
CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST		3	BIBLIOGRAPHY: MARK AND GENESIS	8,9
CHRONOLOGY OF THE PATRIARCHS		4	STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE	10
NEW SERIES OF LESSONS		5	SOME SPECIAL HELPS FOR CHILDREN	10
NEW INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMITTEE		5	DEPARTMENT FOR UTILIZING SURPLUS MATERIAL	11
BASIS FOR TEACHING ALL GRADES		6	LISTS OF WILDE'S BIBLE PICTURES FOR THE YEAR	12
EXTENSION WORK BY REFERENCES TO LITERATURE		6		

MAP OF PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST. MAP OF THE ANCIENT WORLD.

FOUR FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS.

LIST OF LESSONS FOR THE YEAR.

LESSON.	FIRST QUARTER.	PAGE.	LESSON.	SECOND QUARTER.	PAGE.
I. Jan. 6.	JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS. Mark 1 : 1-11	13	I (14). Apr. 7.	JESUS SETS MEN FREE. Mark 7 : 1-37	108
II. Jan. 13.	JESUS BEGINS HIS WORK. Mark 1 : 12-20	22	II (15). Apr. 14.	JESUS REQUIRES CONFESSION AND LOYALTY. Mark 8 : 1-9 : 1	115
III. Jan. 20.	JESUS AT WORK. Mark 1 : 21-45	30	III (16). Apr. 21.	JESUS TRANSFIGURED. Mark 9 : 2-29	122
IV. Jan. 27.	JESUS FORGIVING SIN. Mark 2 : 1-12	37	IV (17). Apr. 28.	JESUS REBUKES SELFISHNESS. Mark 9 : 30-50	130
V. Feb. 3.	JESUS LORD OF THE SABBATH. Mark 2 : 13-3 : 6	46	V (18). May 5.	JESUS SETS NEW STANDARDS OF LIVING. Mark 10 : 1-31	137
VI. Feb. 10.	JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE. Mark 3 : 7-35	53	VI (19). May 12.	JESUS FACES THE CROSS. Mark 10 : 32-52	144
VII. Feb. 17.	JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES—FOUR KINDS OF GROUND. Mark 4 : 1-20	62	VII (20). May 19.	JESUS EXERCISES KINGLY AUTHORITY. Mark 11 : 1-33	151
VIII. Feb. 24.	JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES—THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM. Mark 4 : 21-34	69	VIII (21). May 26.	JESUS SILENCES HIS ADVERSARIES. Mark 12 : 1-44	159
IX. Mar. 3.	JESUS BRINGING PEACE. Mark 4 : 35-5 : 20	75	IX (22). June 2.	JESUS WARNS AND COMFORTS HIS FRIENDS. Mark 13 : 1-14 : 9	166
X. Mar. 10.	JESUS RESTORING LIFE AND HEALTH. Mark 5 : 21-43	83	X (23). June 9.	JESUS FACES BETRAYAL AND DENIAL. Mark 14 : 10-72	173
XI. Mar. 17.	JESUS SENDING FORTH THE TWELVE. Mark 6 : 1-31	90	XI (24). June 16.	JESUS ON THE CROSS. Mark 15 : 1-47	180
XII. Mar. 24.	JESUS MINISTERING TO THE MULTITUDE. Mark 6 : 32-56	96	XII (25). June 23.	JESUS TRIUMPHANT OVER DEATH. Mark 16 : 1-20	187
XIII. Mar. 31.	REVIEW. JESUS OUR EXAM- PLE IN SERVICE. Phil. 2 : 1-11		XIII (26). June 30.	REVIEW. JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER AND LORD	195
	EASTER LESSON. 1 Cor. 15 : 50-58	104			

Studies in the Christian Life.

LESSON.	THIRD QUARTER.	PAGE.
I. July 7.	BEGINNING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. John 1 : 35-51; Acts 16 : 13-34	198
II. July 14.	READING GOD'S WORD. Acts 8 : 26-39; Ps. 19 : 7-11	205
III. July 21.	PRAYING TO GOD. Luke 11 : 1-13; Ps. 145 : 18, 19	212
IV. July 28.	OBEYING GOD. Matt. 4 : 18-22; John 14 : 22-24; Jas. 1 : 22-27	219
V. Aug. 4.	GROWING STRONGER. (TEMPERANCE.) Luke 2 : 42-52; 2 Pet. 1 : 5-8	226
VI. Aug. 11.	HELPING OTHERS. Luke 10 : 25-37; Gal. 6 : 1-10	233
VII. Aug. 18.	WORKING IN THE CHURCH. Acts 2 : 41-47; 4 : 32-35; 6 : 2-4	240
VIII. Aug. 25.	SPEAKING FOR CHRIST. (MISSIONARY.) Luke 12 : 8-12; Acts 1 : 8	247
IX. Sept. 1.	CHRISTIAN GIVING. Luke 6 : 30-38; 21 : 1-4	254
X. Sept. 8.	CONQUERING EVIL. (TEMPERANCE.) 1 Kings 21 : 1-29; Eph. 5 : 6-21	263
XI. Sept. 15.	WINNING THE WORLD TO CHRIST. (MISSIONARY.) Matt. 5 : 13-16; 28 : 18-20; Acts 16 : 1-5; Neh. 1 : 1-11	270
XII. Sept. 22.	FRUITS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. Matt. 25 : 14-30; 5 : 1-12	277
XIII. Sept. 29.	REVIEW. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN	283

Stories of the Patriarchs.

LESSON.	FOURTH QUARTER.	PAGE.
I. Oct. 6.	ABRAM LEAVING HOME. Gen. 12 : 1-9	286
II. Oct. 13.	ABRAM HELPING LOT. Gen. 13 : 5-11; 14 : 14-16	291
III. Oct. 20.	ABRAHAM GIVING ISAAC TO GOD. Gen. 22 : 1-14	298
IV. Oct. 27.	ISAAC AND REBEKAH. Gen. 24	305
V. Nov. 3.	APPETITE AND GREED. (WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY.) Gen. 25 : 27-34	311
VI. Nov. 10.	JACOB DECEIVES HIS FATHER. Gen. 27 : 18-29	316
VII. Nov. 17.	JACOB FLEEING FROM HIS ANGRY BROTHER. Gen. 28 : 10-22	322
VIII. Nov. 24.	JACOB WINS ESAU. Gen. 33 : 1-11	328
IX. Dec. 1.	JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS. Gen. 37 : 18-28	334
X. Dec. 8.	JOSEPH MADE RULER OF EGYPT. Gen. 41 : 33-44	342
XI. Dec. 15.	JOSEPH FORGIVES HIS BROTHERS. Gen. 45 : 1-15	349
XII. Dec. 22.	THE BIRTH OF JESUS. (CHRISTMAS.) Luke 2 : 8-20	356
XIII. Dec. 29.	REVIEW. FAITH'S VICTORIES	364

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INTRODUCTION.

DATES.	PERIODS.	Pivotal Points in the Life of Christ.	LESSON. First Quarter.	SECULAR HISTORY.
B.C. 4. A.D. 26.	BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.	Ancestry. Birth. In the temple. At Nazareth.		Augustus Caesar, Emperor of Rome, B.C. 27—A.D. 14.
A.D. 26.	PREPARATIONS FOR PUBLIC MINISTRY.	Ministry of John. Baptism of Jesus. The temptation.	I II	Death of Herod the Great, April 1, B.C. 4.
A.D. 27. First year.	Judean Ministry.	The year of beginnings.		Tiberius adopted by Augustus, A.D. 4. Terrible famine over the empire, A.D. 5.
Second A.D. 28. year.	PUBLIC	Jesus enters upon his great Galilean ministry. Calls disciples for training in his work. Works miracles, proving his authority and exemplifying his mission. Teaches the forgiveness of sins. Teaches the true use of the Sabbath. States the principles of his kingdom. (Sermon on the Mount.) Chooses the 12 Apostles. Teaches by parables.	II III IV V	Tiberius admitted to co-partnership with Augustus, A.D. 12. Augustus dies August 19, A.D. 14, aged 76.
Third A.D. 29.	MINISTRY	Shows his power over nature. (Calms the storm.) Restores the Gadarene demoniac. Restores life to the dead (Jairus' daughter). Sends forth the 12 to teach and heal. Death of John the Baptist. (End of the forerunner's mission.) Shows his power to supply daily needs. (Feeding of the 5000.) Walks on the water to join the disciples.	VI VII VIII IX X XI XII	Tiberius sole emperor. Cymbeline, king of Britain, B.C. 4. Tiberius retires to Capræ, and lives in seclusion the last eleven years of his life, A.D. 26-37.
year.	OF	Heals a Gentile (daughter of Syrophenician woman). Feeds the 4000. Is confessed by Peter as Lord and Christ. Shows that the true Messiah is a suffering Saviour. His true glory revealed. Transfiguration. Training his followers in missionary work. Warns against selfishness. Blesses little children. Sets a new standard of living. Receives request of James and John. Heals blind Bartimeus.	Second Quarter. I II III IV V VI	Herod Antipas, B.C. 4—A.D. 40. Strabo, B.C. 54—A.D. 24. Ovid, B.C. 57—A.D. 18. Livy, B.C. 59—A.D. 17.
3 or 4 A.D. 30 months.	CHRIST.	Enters Jerusalem as King. Teaches in the Temple and silences his enemies. The Last Passover and the last words with his disciples. The Lord's Supper as the perpetual memorial. Is betrayed and denied. The trial. (An example of heroism and Faith.) The Crucifixion. (The atonement on the Cross.)	VII VIII IX X XI	Seneca, B.C. 4—A.D. 65. "Horace had been dead three years, and Virgil fourteen years" at the birth of Christ.
A.D. 30. April.	THE CRUCIFIXION.			
April. A.D. 30. May.	THE RESUR- RECTION. THE EVER-LIVING SAVIOUR.	Jesus arises from the dead. His appearances during 40 days. The ascension. The ever-living Saviour and King.	XII	

CHRONOLOGY OF THE PATRIARCHS.

LESSON.	DATES. B.C.	USHER'S DATES.	AGE OF Abra- ham.	AGE OF Isaac.	PLACE.	REMARKS AND CORRESPOND- ING EVENTS, SECULAR HIS- TORY.
I Abram Leaving Home	1928	1921	75		Ur of the Chaldees, to Haran.	The date is that of Abraham's first journey in Canaan. He came first to Shechem, then to Bethel.
II Abram Helping Lot	1924?	1918	79		Bethel thence to Hebron.	Date that of separation.
God's Covenant with Abram	1920?	1913	83		Hebron.	Canal connecting the Nile with the Red Sea B.C. 1970.
Destruction of Sodom.	1904	1898	99		Abraham at Hebron. Lot at Sodom.	Hammurabi (Amraphel of Gen. 14, King of Babylon B.C. 2200-1900. His monument found in Susa Shushan) contains the earliest known writing on stone, with laws something like those in Leviticus.
Birth of Isaac.	1903	1897	100		Hebron.	Shepherd Kings in Egypt? Hammurabi dynasty in Babylon.
III Abraham Giving Isaac to God.	1879?	1872	124	25	The Land of Moriah near Jerusalem.	
IV Isaac and Rebekah.	1864	1857	139	40	Beer-lahai-roi (Isaac) Haran in Mesopotamia (Rebekah)	
Death of Abraham.	1828?	1822	175	76	Beersheba.	Buried in cave of Machpelah at Shechem.
(Death of Isaac.)	1724	1716		180	Hebron.	
Birth of Jacob and Esau.	1844	1837	Jacob.	Jos'h.	Beersheba.	Supremacy over the Mediterranean region passing from Babylonia to Egypt.
V The Sale of the Birthright (Appetite and Greed).					Beersheba.	
VI Jacob Deceives His Father.	1784	1760	61		Bethel.	
VII Jacob Fleeing from His Angry Brother.	1784					
Birth of Joseph	1752	1745	93		Padan-Aram in Mesopotamia.	Jacob marries Rachel and Leah, and most of his children born here.
VIII Jacob Wins Esau	1747	1739	98	6	Palestine.	
Birth of Benjamin	1747	1729	98	6	Bethlehem.	
IX Joseph Sold by His Brothers	1736	1729	109	17	Dothan and Egypt.	
X Joseph Made Ruler of Egypt.	1723	1715	122	30	Egypt.	Eighteenth dynasty in Egypt.
First of 7 years of plenty.	1723	1715	122	30	Egypt.	
First year of famine.	1716	1708	129	37	Egypt.	
Jacob's sons go to Egypt to buy food.	1715	1707	130	38	Hebron and Egypt.	
XI Joseph Forgives His Brethren	1715	1707	130	38	The Capital of Egypt.	The Israelites were shepherds in the fertile land of Goshen for 116 years, 1715-1599. Then they were slaves of the Egyptians for 100 years, 1599-1498.
Jacob and his family emigrate to Egypt.	1715	1707	130	38	The Capital of Egypt.	
Death of Jacob.	1698	1689	147		Land of Goshen in Egypt.	
Death of Joseph	1643	1635		110	Land of Goshen in Egypt.	
Beginning of the oppression.	1599	1573			Land of Goshen in Egypt.	

INTRODUCTION.

THIS is the first year's lessons in the new Improved Uniform Series of International Sunday School Lessons, prepared and selected by the new Committee chosen by the International Sunday School Association; by the Sunday School Council; and by the various denominations. They number 30 in all. There were originally 34 members, but two died, and two resigned, leaving only 30.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE.

For the New Series of Lessons 1918-1925.

Selected by the International Sunday School Association :

Calhoun, Hall L., Lexington, Ky.
Eiselen, F. C., Evanston, Ind.
Maclaren, J. J., Toronto, Ont.
Price, Ira M., Chicago, Ill.
Rexford, Elson I., Montreal, Quebec.
Sampey, John R., Louisville, Ky.
Wells, Amos R., Boston, Mass.

Selected by the Sunday School Council :

Barnes, Mrs. J. W., Newark, N. J.
Chalmers, Wm. E., Philadelphia, Pa.
Duncan, J. M., Toronto, Ont.
Fergusson, E. Morris, Philadelphia, Pa.
Meyer, Henry H., New York City.
Van Ness, J. J., Nashville, Tenn.
Winchester, B. S., Boston, Mass.

Selected by the Denominations :

Blake, Edgar, Chicago, Ill., Methodist Episcopal, North.
Chappell, E. B., Nashville, Tenn., Methodist Episcopal, South.
Dargan, E. C., Macon, Ga., Southern Baptist.
Ellington, W. S., Nashville, Tenn., National Bapt. Pub. Board.
Fries, W. O., Dayton, Ohio, United Brethren.
Lingle, W. L., Richmond, Va., Presbyterian, U. S.
Mackenzie, W. Douglas, Hartford, Conn., Congregational.
Miller, R. J., Pittsburg, Pa., United Presbyterian.
Miller, R. W., Philadelphia, Pa., Reformed Church in U. S.
Press, S. A., Evangelical German Synod.
Robertson, J. C., Toronto, Ont., Presbyterian, Canada.
Staebler, C., Cleveland, Ohio, Evangelical Alliance.
Warner, D. S., Chicago, Ill., Free Methodist.
Whitford, W. C., Alfred, N. Y., Seventh Day Baptist.
Wicker, W. E., Elon College, N. C., Christian.
Wilbur, C. E., Pittsburg, Pa., Methodist Protestant.

I understand that while the committee are divided into two sections, one for the "Improved Uniform" lessons and the other for the "Graded" series of courses, they all vote for both kinds.

It is especially interesting to note in how many respects the two kinds of series agree. They are not nearly so far apart as they seem.

Broadly they both agree on the general scheme :

BEGINNERS, PRIMARY, JUNIOR, INTERMEDIATE, SENIOR.

In the "Graded," each of the series is divided into groups of four divisions of a year each.

In the "Uniform" "Uniformity is maintained as a rule by the use of a common title for the whole school, a common brief lesson text for printing, and a common Golden Text. All teachers are also encouraged to read all the 'Additional Material for Teachers'; and with many lessons a Devotional Reading has been chosen for use in the public exercises of the school in lieu of the passage printed as the common lesson for the day." — *Prof. John R. Sampey, D.D.*

In the "Uniform" emphasis is laid, not on the yearly divisions, but on the larger periods, which express changes and progress natural to youth.

Both methods agree that "It is important in constructing a course of moral and religious education to remember that important crises occur in the physical, mental, and moral development of the individual, in his progress from childhood towards adult life. The most prominent crises occur about the ages of thirteen and sixteen or seventeen. Each of these represents the close of one and the beginning of a new period."

The Purpose of the "Uniform" is exactly the same as the purpose of the "Graded" lessons, in their statement :

"To meet the spiritual needs of the pupil in each stage of his development.

"The spiritual needs broadly stated are these :

1. To know God as he has revealed himself to us in nature and in Christ.
2. To exercise toward God, the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, trust, obedience, and worship.
3. To know and do our duty to others.
4. To know and do our duty to ourselves."

"Having thus sought to conserve the benefits of the Uniform System, the Committee decided to seek to adapt the lessons, as thoroughly as possible, to the various departments of the school, with the aid of providing for each department a thoroughly teachable lesson. Special Topics, special Memory Verses, and Additional Material have been designated, wherever it seemed possible to make the lessons more helpful to pupils in the different departments." — *Professor Sampey.*

"Together with the above statement from the Lesson Committee should be read

the informal statement from Dr. John R. Sampey, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Uniform Lessons."

"It will be seen that the officially adopted recommendations provide for :

"(1) A common Scripture basis for the study of the whole school, together with a general theme and Golden Text.

"(2) This common Scripture material to be divided and adapted to the varying needs of the several departments and ages in the school, thus recognizing the principle of grading while holding to the Uniform Scripture basis.

"(3) Other Scripture material can be provided by the Committee for collateral study by any department in connection with the study of the Uniform Lessons.

"The devotional needs of the school to be borne in mind in the selection of Scripture." — *From Professor Sampey.*

The large proportion of Sunday Schools still use the Uniform Lessons, with their various improvements, and the Sunday Schools of America, and the Missionaries in other countries "will still be largely united in the study of a common central passage, with a common title and a common Golden Text. . . . On this common foundation there will be constructed for use by the teachers in the various departments lessons that are truly teachable in the different grades."

The selections for the lessons, and the various ways of using them, are placed with the titles at the head of each lesson.

THE BASIS FOR TEACHING ALL GRADES.

This book is for the teachers of all grades in the Sunday School, from the student's adult classes to the smallest primary. Its purpose is to furnish the knowledge and the practical applications which must underlie all good teaching, even of the youngest classes. It is the basis of correct interpretation, of knowledge of the facts, of statement of principles, of legitimate inferences, on which the teacher may securely stand, and adapt his instruction to the particular grade he is teaching. For practically all schemes of Sunday School lessons, for old or young, at some time in their course take up in general the same passages of Scripture as the International Lessons for which during each six years' course are selected the most interesting and most helpful parts of Scripture for the young.

EXTENSION WORK BY REFERENCES TO LITERATURE.

The limitations of space compel us to omit many things that are very helpful in illustrating the lesson, especially to children, and also fuller discussions of subjects which the adults would like to pursue farther. For this reason we not only present as full a list as we can of books upon the general subject of our lessons in the following Bibliography, but also bring to the notice of teachers with each lesson a list of special helps on that lesson, and also volumes of literature which illuminate the subject by means of sidelights, literary illustrations, poetic references, and every other help we can find that comes within the limits of the space at our command. These may not only recall familiar passages of literature to the teacher's mind, but may also suggest others ; for every treasure and every gem points to the mine from which it came ; every flower, to the gardens where a thousand more are growing. Every suggestion is fertile in other suggestions, like the famous Oriental fountain into whose waters a good angel infused such power that a new fountain sprang up wherever a drop of its waters fell. This does not supersede thought, but stimulates thought. It no more presents "predigested foods" or leads the teacher to a "cramming process" than does every sermon or volume or lecture to class by a professor.

On the contrary, it opens doors to further investigation and study beyond any other, while at the same time it furnishes the best and choicest aids, in the best form for teaching, to the great mass of Sunday School teachers who are "business men and busy women" and who must have such aid or do poorer work as teachers.

PICTURES AS AN AID TO TEACHING.

After obtaining a knowledge of the lesson material and its applications, few aids to teaching are more effective than pictures of various kinds. *Photographs* of great pictures can be obtained for about 15¢ each.

Underwood's Stereoscopic Views of scenes in the Holy Land, taken from nature, by most experienced artists, are a great aid to the teacher in making the environment of this year's lessons vivid and real to his scholars. (Underwood and Underwood, New York.)

INTRODUCTION.

Colored Photographs. Beautiful photographs in the colors of nature have been taken of many places and scenes in the Holy Land, which combine the truthfulness of a photograph with a richness of color and delicacy of tinting that remind one of fine oil or water-color paintings. I have them always in my study to make me familiar with Bible scenes and places.

Colorgraphs are reproductions in colors of the most celebrated paintings of the world by a lately discovered process, by means of which the colorings of the originals are duplicated in all their richness and beauty. These pictures are marvels of beauty and attractiveness. (W. A. Wilde Company.)

There are several thousand inexpensive pictures illustrating the Holy Bible, consisting of reproductions of pictures by famous artists, and of photographs from the land itself. (See the catalogue issued by the Sunday School Commission, 73 Fifth Ave., New York City.) Among the best of these are those issued by the W. A. Wilde Co.

The Penny Pictures in half-tone. The half-tone process which gives excellent copies of famous paintings and scenes from nature, illustrating the life of Christ and the Old Testament history. These can be used in the class, or can be pasted in blank books. The scholars can write out the story of the lesson in connection with the pictures. These pictures are only one cent apiece. A list of some of the pictures are here given (page 12). If more are desired, send for catalogue to W. A. Wilde Company. Containing 800 subjects.

MAP WORK FOR THE LESSONS.

In connection with pictures of events and places map work is of great advantage.

1. The class can make maps out of paper pulp, and mark on them the journeys and the places mentioned in the lessons, and the noted cities or places connected with them.

2. They can color the Bailey Series of Outline maps illustrating Biblical history. Of this series of six maps with nine key maps, two maps with the corresponding key maps belong to this year's lessons. They show the Ancient Hebrew World and Palestine. They can be colored to show the nations, the physical features, location of places, and journeys. This can be done in the school hour, at home, or at special gatherings of the class.

Large size, 12c a dozen, 65¢ a hundred. Small size, 10¢ a dozen, 45¢ a hundred. With explanatory folder. By Albert E. Bailey, headmaster of Allen School. Published by W. S. Kilburn, 125 Summer St., Boston.

3. Raised maps exactly adapted for this purpose can be colored according to the various countries, and the names of places written upon them. These can be obtained of the publisher, W. B. Harison, 47 Broad St., New York, from 5¢ up according to size.

4. The most interesting series of all is Rev. Milton S. Littlefield's historical series of sixteen outline political maps, covering the whole Old Testament, by periods; showing the sweep of events by indicating the successive boundary lines of the countries mentioned, and the rise and fall of nations. These maps are to be colored by the scholars themselves according to a consistent color scheme, thus forming a picture history of Israel, with the surrounding nations and influences at each period. The Jews are always represented by red, — a line for Abraham's journeys, a broader red line for the march through the wilderness. The Egyptians are always in one color, the Midianites, the Syrians, the Philistines, each in its own color through the series.

These maps can be obtained for 1¢ each, or 60¢ per hundred, by sending to Rev. Milton S. Littlefield.

OLD TASKS WITH A NEW SPIRIT.

"Americans, like the Athenians of whom Paul speaks, ever run after that which is strange and new. So pronounced is this tendency, many of us are ready to declare that the only way to get ahead in the work of the Kingdom is to adopt some new and novel scheme. If the cause is to boom, we reason, there must be a new movement of some kind. What it is does not so much matter. We are not disposed to scrutinize it too closely or to test it by trial. The one most essential thing is that it shall be unique; the best recommendation, that it has never been tried before.

"The coming of the new year accentuates the desire for new tasks and new methods. The old familiar tasks seem more than ever commonplace and dull. Accordingly, we raise as a popular slogan, 'A new program for the new year,' and set our wits to work to discover the newest fad in movements bearing a religious label.

"But hold! Do we do well to allow this demand for the new to carry so far? Is it reasonable? Does the coming of the new year bring us no higher suggestion than this? If we ourselves are unchanged and those for whom we labor are the same, what grounds for hope have we that new plans or novel methods will result in greater success in the work of the Kingdom?

"What the new year really suggests is *not new methods, but new men; not new tasks, but doing the old tasks with a new spirit.* The Kingdom is an eternal Kingdom; the task of Kingdom accomplishment is ever the same. Human duty in relation to it remains unchanging through all the changing years. These things are fixed by the divine order which it is not meant for men to alter. The call to us is to attain to truer conceptions of the Kingdom, to clearer visions of our duty, to purer motives and deeper devotion in service." — *From the Methodist Sunday School Journal.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Notices of books and pictures on special subjects are given with each lesson.
The First and Second Quarters are based upon the Gospel According to Mark.

COMMENTARIES ON THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

Mark, by A. B. Barnes, D.D., in the first volume of the *Expositor's Greek Testament*. (Doran, \$5.00.)

Cartoons of St. Mark, by Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D. (Revell.) Especially good; but only obtainable at second-hand bookstores, or from libraries.

Jesus According to Mark, by J. M. Thomson. (Dutton, \$1.50.)

The Gospel According to St. Mark, by Prof. H. B. Swete, D.D. (Macmillan, \$3.75.)

The Expositor's Bible. (Doran, 50¢ net.) *The Cambridge Bible*, 75¢.

The American Commentary on Mark, Clarke and Bliss. (Amer. Bapt. Pub. Soc., \$2.75.)

Word Studies, by Prof. Marvin R. Vincent. Mark is in Vol. 1. (Scribner's, \$4.00.)

International Critical Commentary on Mark, by Rev. E. P. Gould, D.D. (Scribner's, \$2.50.)

St. Mark, by the Ven. W. C. Allen. One of the Oxford Church Bible Commentary series. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

Westminster New Testament; Mark, by Prof. S. W. Green; one of ten volumes under the general editorship of Principal A. E. Garvie, M.A. (Revell, 75¢.)

Constructive Studies in the Gospel According to Mark, by Prof. Ernest D. Burton. (Univ. of Chicago Press, \$1.00.)

Gospel According to St. Mark, by Rev. G. E. Milner, M.A. (Oxford University Press, 1s. net.)

Mark in *The Bible for Home and School*, by Dean Jacobus of the Hartford Theological School. (Macmillan, 75¢.)

All the commentaries on the Gospels will bring out new light upon the themes of Mark's Gospel.

So will the books on the Life of Christ; as, for instance:

A New Life of Christ "done in mosaic," by Wayne Whipple. From "The Christian Endeavor World."

Jesus of Nazareth: A Life, by S. C. Bradley. (Sherman, French & Co., Boston, \$2.00 net.)

The Life of Jesus, by William Byron Forbush. For the Intermediate scholars. (75¢.)

A new arrangement of the Gospel story is *The Matchless Life*, by William W. Osgoodshy. (Pilgrim Press, \$1.00, net.) This gives the complete record of Christ's life, taken from the four gospels and arranged in chronological order.

The Supreme Revelation, by William C. Schaeffer. (Revell, \$1.50, net.) Dr. Schaeffer's book is a series of twelve lectures on the teaching of Jesus Christ as the supreme revelation of God to mankind.

COMMENTARIES ON GENESIS.

For the Fourth Quarter. Stories of the Patriarchs.

Most of the latest Commentaries on this part of the Bible lay their chief emphasis upon the separation of the sources from which the text of our Bible is interwoven. And, assuming that each thread used is the whole of the story from which it was taken, they often make the separated parts contradictory, while the simple story as given in our Bibles is a consistent and true narrative. Rightly used these Commentaries throw new light on the composition of the early books of the Bible, but contain very little that helps the Sunday School teacher of children.

On the other hand, the older Commentaries, while very helpful in understanding the meaning of the Bible text, its truths, and applications to life and conduct, which the teacher needs, scarcely touch the problems which the most modern Commentaries cause to arise as to the truthfulness of the Scriptures.

And there are almost no Commentaries yet written between these two classes. In the words of Prof. Shailer Mathews, — "Biblical science has progressed rapidly during the past few years, but the reader still lacks a brief, comprehensive commentary that shall extend to him in usable form material now at the disposition of the student." The reason is (1) that there is far less call than formerly for Commentaries, except those which teach and apply the *International Lessons*. The twenty-five million Sunday School teachers and scholars, in our families, are the principal students of the Bible to-day. (2) The tendency is to take broader views of the Bible History, and to use the many separate books which throw light on the meaning and movement of the Bible narrative, and on its principles and applications to modern life.

Genesis, one of the *American Commentaries on the Old Testament*, by Prof. Calvin Goodspeed, D.D., and Prof. D. M. Welton, D.D. (Amer. Bapt. Pub. Soc., \$2.00.)

The Expositor's Bible, Genesis. (Doran, 50¢, net.)

The Cambridge Bible, Genesis. (Cambridge Univ. Press; or Putnams, \$1.10.)

Bible for Home and School, Genesis. (Macmillan, 90¢.)

The One Volume Bible Commentary. Edited by Dummelow. (Macmillan, \$2.50.)

Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scriptures*. (Doran. Write to the publisher for prospectus.)

Great Texts of the Bible. Edited by James Hastings.

The Old Testament Stories, by Mary W. Brownson. (Wilde & Co., Boston, 75¢.)

The Modern Reader's Bible, Genesis, by Prof. Richard G. Moulton. (Macmillan, 50¢.)

Westminster Commentaries, Genesis, by Prof. S. R. Driver. (Gorham, New York, \$4.20, net.)

The International Critical Commentary, by Professor Skinner. (Scribner's, \$3.00.)

Genesis, Critically and Exegetically Expounded, Prof. A. Dillmann, D.D. 2 vols. (Scribner's, \$6.00.)

A New Commentary on Genesis, Prof. Franz Delitzsch, D.D. 2 vols. (Scribner's, \$4.50, net.)

CHARACTER STUDIES OF THE PATRIARCHS.

These are, on the whole, more helpful to the Sunday School teacher than the commentaries.

Heroes of Israel, by W. Garden Blaikie, D.D., LL.D. (Nelsons.)

Representative Men of the Bible, by Rev. George Matheson. (Doran, \$1.00.)

Joseph the Dreamer, by Robert Bird. (Scribner's, \$1.50.)

Revelation by Character, by Robert Tuck, B.A. (Elliot Stock, London.)

Joseph, by Rev. F. B. Meyer. (Revell Co., 50¢.)

Bible Biography, by Theodore E. Schmauk. (Lutheran Church Pub'ns.)

Famous Men of the Old Testament, by M. B. Wharton, D.D.

Joseph the Prime Minister, by Wm. M. Taylor, D.D. (Harpers, 50¢.)

Joseph and the Land of Egypt, by Prof. A. H. Sayce, D.D. (Lippincott, 30¢.)

History of the Jewish Church, Vol. 1. Stanley. (Scribner's, \$1.75.)

Old Testament Characters, Geikie. (James Pott & Co.)

Women of the Bible, by various authors. (Harpers, \$1.00.)

Biblical Dramas, arranged by Rev. Harris G. Hale and Rev. Newton M. Hall. (Pilgrim Press.)

THE THIRD QUARTER. STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, are of a different class from the other periods. Instead of a continuous movement through Mark for half a year, and a regular succession of great men through Genesis, there is a series of topics on the Christian life, much needed by the young people, and which is both interesting and profitable.

This Quarter has been written by that genius, Amos R. Wells, Litt.D., LL.D., editor of the *Christian Endeavor World*, and a member of the Lesson Committee; who for several years has written one quarter of SELECT NOTES. One of the book notices for 1917 reads thus: "No happier combination could have been devised than that which has resulted in the association of Professor Wells with Doctor Peloubet in recent issues of 'Peloubet's Notes.'"

SUMMARY OF THE COURSE.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Beginning the Christian Life. | 7. Working in the Church. |
| 2. Reading God's Word. | 8. Speaking for Christ. |
| 3. Praying to God. | 9. Christian Giving. |
| 4. Obeying God. | 10. Conquering Evil. |
| 5. Growing Stronger. | 11. Winning the World to Christ. |
| 6. Helping Others. | 12. Fruits of the Christian Life. |
| | 13. Review: What it Means to be a Christian. |

THE AIMS OF THIS COURSE AS DESCRIBED BY THE LESSON COMMITTEE.

"This is the first of a series of brief topical studies of the Bible, which will prove, it is hoped, a pleasing and profitable feature of the Improved Uniform Lessons. The aim is to induce the pupils to range through the entire Bible, and become acquainted with all the leading passages relating to each theme introduced, thus growing familiar with all parts of the Bible, and discovering the unity of the Book. To this end it is sought to select for each subject passages that comprehend a great variety of truths, avoiding duplications of thought except as these are involved in famous passages that should be known by all. Many of these are included in the sections of 'Additional Material for Teachers' and 'Additional Material,' and the pupils will be interested in searching for still further Bible light on each topic. It is hoped that the lesson will be understood as including, for the older classes, all of the 'Additional Material.' For the benefit of the younger classes story material on each subject is pointed out, with different topics and with memory verses. The general titles, which unify the series, are comprehensive, and may be used in all teachers' helps. The primary topics are more picturesque and the topics for the older classes are analytical."

BIBLE STORIES FOR CHILDREN.

Stories and Story-telling in Moral and Religious Education, by Edward Porter St. John, A.M., Pd.M., Professor of Pedagogy in the Hartford School of Religious Pedagogy. Bound in brown boards, 100 pages, 50¢ net. Postage 5¢. Admirably suited to what the writer intended it to be, a teacher's text-book on story-telling. Written by a master-teacher, it is simple, practical, and every bit worth while. (Pilgrim Press.)

That Sweet Story of Old, by Margaret Sangster, is a condensed life of Christ, charmingly told, and captivating to children. (Dutton, 50¢.)

Tell Me a True Story, by Mary Stewart. (\$1.25.)

The Garden of Eden, by Dean George Hodges of the Episcopal Theological Sem., Cambridge, Mass. This is being followed by several other Old Testament stories, under attractive titles. (Houghton and Mifflin, \$1.50.)

When the King Came, by Dean George Hodges, which proved very attractive to children. New Testament. (Houghton Mifflin Co., \$1.20.)

A Child's Story of the Life of Christ, by Helen Brown Hoyt. A very attractive book, with 137 half-tone illustrations. (W. A. Wilde Co.)

On Holy Ground, by W. L. Worcester. Bible stories beautifully illustrated with more than 500 pictures of Bible lands. (Lippincott, \$3.00.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The Story of the Bible, by J. L. Hurlbut, D.D. Finely illustrated. (Winston Co., Philadelphia. New Edition, 1912. \$1.50.)

Old Testament Stories for Little Children, by Laura Ella Cragin. A treasury of stories vividly told, well suited for school, Sunday school, and home. (Revell, \$1.25, net.)

Henry Altemus Company, Philadelphia, publish two series of small books neatly gotten up: *Illustrated Children of the Bible Series*, and *Illustrated Beautiful Stories Series*. 25¢ each.

The best Young People's Bibles and the most interesting are the Oxford Pictorial Palestine Bibles, the ones that contain 116 chromographs and engravings.

The Gorham Press (Boston, Mass.) is getting out soon a book for children on the story of the early Christian church as found in the Acts and Epistles, entitled *The Heralds of the King*, by Alice D. Adams, A.M., assistant to Rev. F. N. Peloubet, D.D. It is profusely illustrated.

SOME SPECIAL HELPS FOR TEACHERS OF CHILDREN.

Problems of Boyhood. A Course in Ethics for Boys of High-School Age. By Franklin W. Johnson. 154 pages, \$1.00, postage extra (weight 1 lb. 1 oz.). This book, prepared by the laboratory method, is the result of the experience of a teacher of boys in the high school, a leader of high-school boys in the Sunday school, and of work with boys of a similar age in Young Men's Christian Association groups. The author is the principal of the University of Chicago High School. Such topics as Keeping Clean, Habits, Gambling, Betting, Clean Speech, Right Thinking, Sex, Loyalty, Self-Control, and other themes of equal importance are discussed informally and in such a way as to arouse the keenest interest on the part of boys.

Other books on the Boy Problem: *That Boy of Yours*, by Kirtley. (Hodder & Stoughton, \$1.00.)

Training the Boy, by McKeever. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

Confidential Chats with Boys, by Howard. (E. J. Clode, N. Y., 75¢.)

The Boy Problem in the Home, by William Byron Forbush, author of *The Boy Problem*. (Pilgrim Press, \$1.00, net.)

Books on the Girl Problem: *Three Gifts of Life*, by Nellie M. Smith. (Dodd, Mead & Co., 50¢.)

Young Working Girls, by Woods and Kennedy. (Houghton Mifflin Co., \$1.00.)

WORLD'S SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

DEPARTMENT FOR UTILIZING SURPLUS MATERIAL.

"*Foreword*. In nearly every home, church, and Sunday School in North America, there is a quantity of surplus material which would become of great value if properly used. The Department for Utilizing Surplus Material furnishes an excellent channel for service, and offers the opportunity to turn all such 'surplus material' into a valuable asset for Christian Missionary work in the foreign fields of the world.

"*Pictures*. Pictures are of value for gaining an audience as well as for teaching the lesson which follows. The gift of a small picture is sure to draw." Many native preachers base their preaching largely upon the scenes in the lesson picture rolls. Scrap books are in great demand. So are quarterlies, papers, books, special exercises for Christmas and Easter.

"*Christmas Gifts*. In addition to your proposed gifts of pictures you would furnish especial gladness by forwarding a package for Christmas distribution.

"Dressed dolls are eagerly desired. A suitable size is about 10 inches long. 'Go-to-sleep' eyes add much to the value and little to the cost. The dolls can be simply dressed, but not in white, which is generally the sign of mourning in Oriental countries. Any class of girls would delight in such special work.

"Other things that could be included are small toys, games which do not require much knowledge of English, ribbons, work bags, pencils, paints, and knives and marbles for the boys.

"Enclose a stamp for your reply. Always indicate your denomination in full. Do not send any packages to the New York office."

Samuel D. Price, Superintendent. 216 Metropolitan Tower, N. Y.

WILDE'S BIBLE PICTURE SETS.

Illustrating the International Improved Uniform Sunday School Lessons for 1918.

Sixty pictures enclosed in an attractive portfolio, 60 cents, postpaid.

First Quarter.

Lesson 1.

- 43 John the Baptist preaching. Titian.

Lesson 2.

- 47 Christ and the Fisherman. Zimmermann.
547 Christ tempted by Satan. Cornicelius.

Lesson 3.

- 689 Christ teaching in the Synagogue at Capernaum. Bida.

Lesson 4.

- 686 Jesus heals the Man with the Palsy. Bida.

Lesson 5.

- 63 Jesus and his Disciples going through the Cornfield. Doré.
698 The Man with the Withered Hand. Bida.

Lesson 6.

- 693 Jesus appoints the Twelve.

Lesson 7.

- 77 Parable of the Sower. H. L. Robert.

Lesson 8.

- 728 Jesus and the Multitude of People.

Lesson 9.

- 78 Storm on the Sea. Doré.

Lesson 10.

- 81 Raising the Daughter of Jairus. A. Keller.

Lesson 11.

- 98 "Peace be to this House." W. C. T. Dobson.

Lesson 12.

- 83 Feeding of the Five Thousand. Murillo.

Lesson 13.

REVIEW.

Second Quarter.

Lesson 1.

- 594 Christ and the Canaanite Woman. Jean Drouais.
703 Jesus heals a Deaf Man. Bida.

Lesson 2.

- 219 Cæsarea Philippi.
88 Christ's Charge to St. Peter. Raphael.

Lesson 3.

- 89 The Transfiguration. Raphael.

Lesson 4.

- 97 Jesus and the Child. H. Ballheim.

Lesson 5.

- 112 Christ and the Young Ruler. H. Hofmann.

Lesson 6.

- 121 Christ and Zebedee's Children. Bonifazio.

Lesson 7.

- 52 Purification of the Temple. H. Hofmann.

Lesson 8.

- 126 Tribute to Cæsar. Titian.

Lesson 9.

- 734 Jesus anointed for his Burial.

Lesson 10.

- 132 The Last Supper. Bida.

Lesson 11.

- 148 The Crucifixion. Hofmann.

Lesson 12.

- 341 Holy Women at the Tomb. Ender.

Lesson 13.

REVIEW.

Third Quarter.

Lesson 1.

- 738 Conversion of the Philippian Jailer.

Lesson 2.

- 719 The Soul's Awakening. Sant.
739 Philip and the Eunuch.

Lesson 3.

- 535 Jesus in Prayer. Bida.

Lesson 4.

- 696 The Calling of the Fishermen. Bida.

Lesson 5.

- 34 Jesus. Twelve years old, on his Way to Jerusalem. Mengelberg.
39 Jesus with the Doctors in the Temple. Hofmann.

Lesson 6.

- 466 The Good Samaritan. Plockhörst.

Lesson 7.

- 402 Chorister Boys. Mrs. Anderson.

Lesson 8.

- 192 Jerusalem, from the Mount of Olives.

Lesson 9.

- 127 The Widow's Mite. Doré.

Lesson 10.

- 661 Elijah denouncing the Crime of Ahab in Naboth's Vineyard.

Lesson 11.

- 764 "The Place by the Riverside."

Lesson 12.

- 61 The Sermon on the Mount. Hofmann.
730 Parable of the Talents.

Lesson 13.

REVIEW.

Fourth Quarter.

Lesson 1.

- 350 Abraham's Journeying into the Land of Canaan. Doré.

Lesson 2.

- 707 Separation of Abram and Lot.

Lesson 3.

- 357 The Trial of Abraham's Faith. Doré.

Lesson 4.

- 360 Eliezer meets Rebecca at the Well. Doré.
362 Isaac receives Rebecca. Doré.

Lesson 5.

- 566 Esau sells his Birthright. Skeitz.

Lesson 6.

- 567 The Blessing of Jacob. Horst.

Lesson 7.

- 366 Jacob's Dream. Murillo.
608 Jacob in the House of Laban. H. F. Schopin.

Lesson 8.

- 706 The Meeting of Jacob and Esau.

Lesson 9.

- 368 Joseph sold by his Brethren. Schopin.
607 Joseph's Coat brought to Jacob. Henry Warren.

Lesson 10.

- 570 Joseph and Pharaoh's Dream. La Tometo.
571 Joseph selling Corn. Barth. Breenburg.

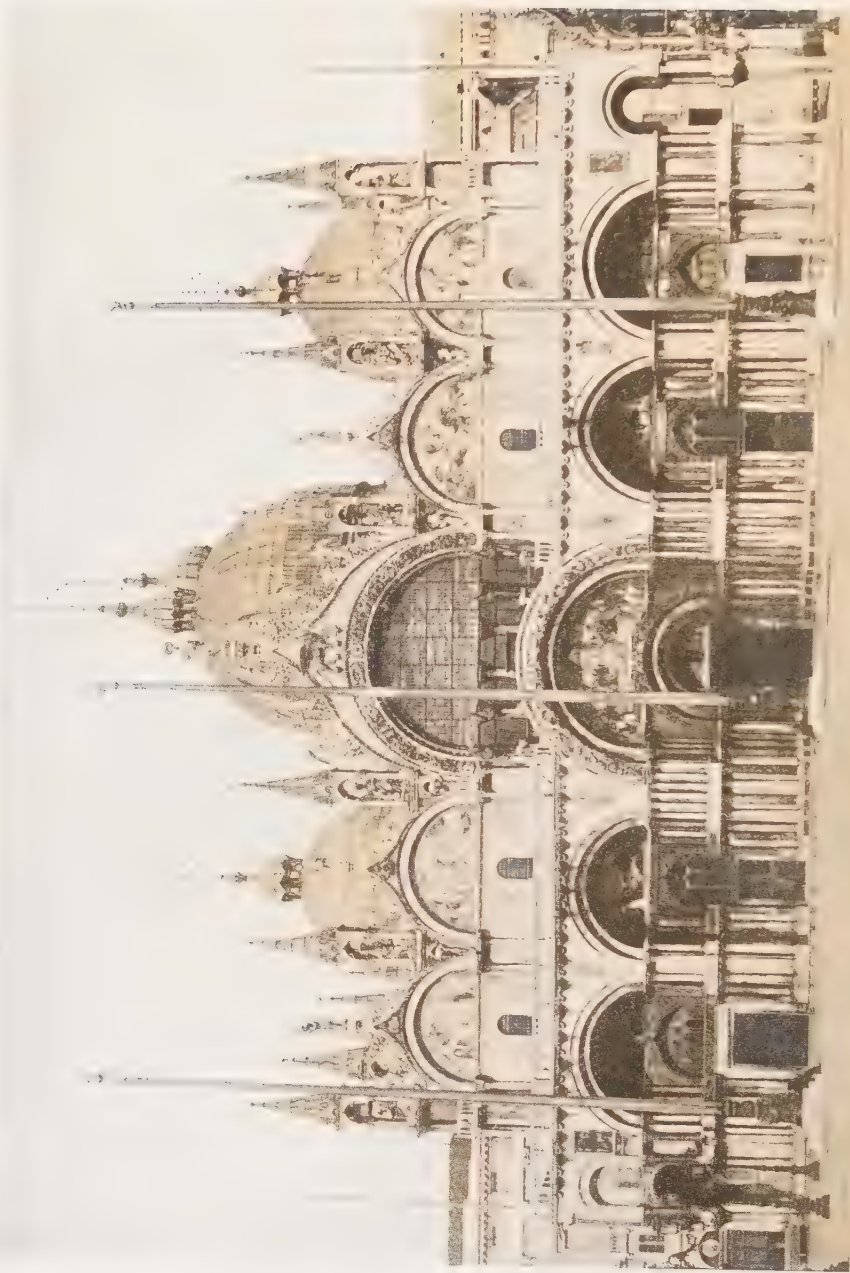
Lesson 11.

- 372 Joseph making himself known to his Brethren. Doré.
373 Jacob going down to Egypt. Doré.

Lesson 12.

- 11 Arrival of the Shepherds. H. Lerolle.

Outline maps of Palestine, $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9$ inches, can be obtained at the rate of one cent each for ten or more. Wilde's Bible Pictures are printed on cards 6×8 inches. Price, one cent each, postpaid. *No orders for less than ten received.* In ordering pictures please give the NUMBER and not the artist's name.



ST. MARK'S, VENICE.



FIRST QUARTER.

THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD.

STUDIES IN MARK.

JANUARY 6—MARCH 31, 1918.

LESSON I.—January 6.

JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS.—Mark 1:1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.* — JOHN 1:29.

Additional Material for Teachers: Isa. 40:3-5; Mal. 3:1-3; Luke 1:5-25, 39-80; Matt. 3:1-17; Luke 3:1-18; John 1:19-42.

Primary Memory Verse: Thou shalt call his name *Jesus*; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. — Matt. 1:21.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: Heralds of the King.

Intermediate Memory Verses: Luke 10:1, 2.

Additional Material: Luke 9:1-6, 10, 11; 10:1-12, 17-20; Acts 9:10-16.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The purpose of these Improved Uniform-Scripture Lessons is exactly the same as the purpose of the other forms of "Graded Lessons"; for they are, in use, adapted to the same different grades, and with the same departmental names.

"To meet the spiritual needs of the pupil in each stage of his development.

"The spiritual needs broadly stated are these:

"1. To know God as he has revealed himself to us in nature and in Christ.

"2. To exercise toward God, the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, trust, obedience and worship.

"3. To know and do our duty to others.

"4. To know and do our duty to ourselves."

Each grade selects from the Scripture Lesson the portion adapted to the scholars in that grade, by simply omitting those portions which belong only to the higher grades.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The birth of Jesus, the last part of B.C. 5, probably at or near Christmas.

The ministry of John the Baptist began in the summer of A.D. 26.

Baptism of Jesus by John, January, A.D. 27.

Place. — Jesus was born at Bethlehem and was baptized in the Jordan.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 Jesus the Son of God and Son of Man.
 Prophecies of the coming of Christ.
 In what ways did John prepare the way for Jesus?
 The character of John's preaching.
 Why Jesus was baptized.
 Why and how did God give Jesus His public approval?

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus the Son of God.

- I. JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD, v. 1; John I: 1-5, 14.
- II. PROPHECIES OF ONE WHO SHOULD PREPARE THE WAY FOR HIM, vs. 2, 3.
- III. HOW JOHN PREPARED THE WAY, vs. 4-8.
- IV. THE DIVINE ENDORSEMENT OF JESUS AS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD, vs. 9-11.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Mark. The Expositor's Greek Testament. The American

Commentary (Bapt. Pub. Co.). Gospel According to St. Mark by Prof. H. B. Swete (Macmillan). The Cambridge Bible.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The Bible of St. Mark's, Venice, by Alexander Robertson, D.D. (George Allen, London). Whittier's *Poems*, "Eternal Goodness" and "Our Master," illustrate the grace and truth of the Father revealed in Jesus.

THE LESSON IN ART.

John the Baptist, Dolci, Ittenbach, Sarto,* Titian,* Thorwaldsen.
John the Baptist Preaching in the Wilderness, Doré.
The Baptism of Jesus, Murillo, Doré, Giotto, Cima de Conegliano, Bellini, Francia, Perugino,* Maratta.*
Farrar's Life of Christ in Art. J. Burns's *The Christ Face in Art* has two pictures of Christ's face at his baptism. In Miss Eva Tappan's *The Christ Story* is an excellent copy of Du Mond's "Baptism of Christ."
 * In Wilde's Bible Pictures.

The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus the Son of God.

I. JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD, v. 1; John I: 1-5, 13. *The Gospel*, from the Anglo-Saxon "God-spel," "God-story," the "Good News" about God, the glad tidings that Jesus the Son of God had been sent to be our Saviour and King.

This verse states the beginning of the history of Jesus as recorded by John Mark, John being his Jewish name and Mark his Roman. His mother was Mary, a well-to-do member of the Church in Jerusalem; and by his contact with the apostles, as well as by what he saw of Jesus in his early life, he was fully competent to write the life of Jesus.



St. Mark's emblem is the lion: expressing courage, dignity, and energy.

Jesus Christ. "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah," whom the Jews were expecting to be the long-promised Deliverer of their nation.

The Good News of the Son of God. Why was His coming good news? Because His coming was the greatest event in the history of the world. Because of what He was and is, and is doing now.

Turn to John I: 1-5, and note that "The Word" — that is the outward expression of an unseen, invisible spirit or thought — was the Son of God, who revealed God to us when He became man in the person of Jesus Christ. He was with God, and was God, and brought life and light to man.

In Col. I: 15, 16, we are told that Jesus

"Is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

"For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by him and for him."

And in Heb. I: 3:

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

This eternal Son of God became flesh by being born of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem, as described by Matthew and Luke. This was mysterious, but no more mys-

terious than is the coming of the soul of each one of us, — the soul that no one has ever seen, — in some mysterious way into our bodies, and expressing itself through our bodies.

Turn again to John 1:14. — **And the Word, the Son of God, became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the radiant outshining of his character and love, full of grace and truth.**

The Son of God is the Only Sufficient Saviour. 1. He is the only being seen on earth who can help all people at all times, in all places, with all power, in every kind of need.

2. Belonging in heaven, and familiar with the unseen world, He can reveal the truth about them from positive knowledge. He knew that of which He spoke.

3. He was the revealer of God. As Jesus said to the apostle Philip, — “If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” (John 14:7-9.)

Jesus in his character, actions, words, living, miracles, teachings, revealed exactly what was true about God. This helps us to realize God whom no man has ever seen.

4. The proof that Jesus was raised from the dead and is a living force in the world is well expressed by Dr. Lyman Abbott in a recent *Outlook*, —

“There is no doubt that Christianity is the greatest moral force the world has ever known. . . . It is wholly inconsistent with the moral order of the world to believe that the greatest moral force in the world is founded on either a fraud or a delusion. Millions of men and women are today living on a higher moral plane and actuated by a nobler purpose because they are inspired by the spirit of Him who lives in His disciples, and manifests His presence by the life which He inspires in them.”

His coming changed the moral world; and is still changing it for the better.

While much of the above will be beyond the younger children, they can find not a little help in the simple facts, and the assurance that Jesus loves them, and is their helper, as shown in Matt. 10:14, 15.

Illustration. It may perhaps be helpful to children, and even to older people, to enable them to realize how God may be speaking to His people in every part of the world, if they consider the wonderful things that are being done now at the time of this writing. A man sitting in his office in New York has spoken to a man in San Francisco, 3000 miles away. Each one could hear the other singing “My country, ’tis of thee.” And all the guests at a banquet at Washington, D. C., heard the voices of two little boys who had a short good-night talk with their parents, who were among those present.

More marvellous is what is being done by the wireless messages. A ship in distress calls ships hundreds of miles away to come and help save the passengers. More than this, a wireless message was sent from Washington, D. C., across the continent and the Pacific Ocean, 4600 miles, and a lone operator in a hut on the shore of Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, listened to the words from 4600 miles away. “The distance over which Espenshied [at Hawaii] heard naval officers at Arlington talk is greater than the distance from New York to London, New York to Paris, New York to Berlin; greater than from New York to the north pole. For from New York



Bethlehem.

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ;

2. As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

London is 3740 miles ; to Paris 4020 ; to Berlin 4385 ; and from New York to the north pole, 3435 miles."

And an operator in Hawaii *overheard* in his office the talk between Washington, D. C., and Paris, in France.

II. PROPHECIES OF ONE WHO SHOULD PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE COMING OF THE SON OF GOD, vs. 2, 3. More than five hundred years before the Son of God appeared on the earth there were prophecies of a messenger who should

prepare the way before him. Verse 3 is a condensed statement of the prophecy in Isaiah 40 : 3, 4. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low : and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.

The messenger is called a "voice," (1) because the message was a voice from God, and the emphasis lay upon the truth spoken. (2) Because the man himself was a sermon. (3) Because he, insignificant in the world's eyes, like a voice, a mere vibration of air, yet produced a mighty effect upon the souls of men. (4) Because his coming



From a photograph.

The Wilderness of Judea.

was one of the still, small voices of providence speaking to the hearts of men.

The preparation is pictured in the familiar terms of those days. "In the mountain regions, the washing of the hillsides by the heavy winter rains destroys, each year, a large portion of the best laid roads. In the desert regions the shifting sands, and in the more fertile regions the abundant growth of weeds and shrubbery, make Eastern roads well-nigh impassable, unless care is exercised for their frequent or special clearing. In many parts of the East the ancient roads were prepared or repaired only at the special call of the king, for his special service on an exceptional occasion." — *H. C. Trumbull, in Studies in Oriental Social Life.*

"On going from Cairo to the Pyramids, over an exceptionally good road, the traveler will not fail to be told that it was built for the Prince of Wales [Edward VII of England], or for the Empress Eugenie, or for the Khedive himself, or even for Napoleon the Great." — *Prof. Isaac G. Hall.*

Every child can understand the need of preparation, as of a garden for seeds, of lessons for school, etc.

All this was an Illustration, or Parable, of the spiritual preparations made for the coming of the Lord to individuals, to nations, and to the world, especially exemplified in the story of John the Baptist. (1) Fill up the valleys of neglected duties, the sins of omission, defects of prayer, of faith, of love, of work. (2) Bring down the mountains of pride, sin, selfishness, unbelief, worldliness, hypocrisy, wrongs against men. (3) Straighten out all crooked places, crooked dealings with others, crooked ways of sin, settle difficulties, confess sins. (4) Smooth the rough places, harshness of temper and manner, lack of courtesy, coldness, fault-finding, which are the little foxes that spoil the vines.

III. HOW JOHN PREPARED THE WAY FOR JESUS, vs. 4-8. Study Luke 3 : 1-18 ; Mal. 3 : 1-3 ; Matt. 3 : 4-12 ; Luke 1 : 17-80.

Between verse 3 in Mark, the prophecy of the herald messenger in Isaiah and Malachi, and verse 4, its fulfilment, several centuries intervened. The birth of John the Baptist, the promised herald, occurred in June, B.C. 5, and of Jesus six months later, in December, B.C. 5; both in the reign of Augustus Cæsar.

But 30 years more intervened before John began to announce the coming of the Saviour. He spent those years in the wilderness preparing for his work, while Jesus spent his 30 years of preparation in the peaceful home life of Nazareth.

John's Training in the Wilderness. And was in the deserts (Luke 1:80), not barren sands, but the wild, rocky, thinly-inhabited places along the western shores of the Dead Sea and the Jordan, where he afterward preached.

"He had not far to go to find them; visits to them were frequent in early boyhood; constant abode when youth had passed into manhood." *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

The reasons for this experience may have been :

1. That he might be taught of God directly the truths of His word, unbiased by the prevailing false ideas especially concerning the Messiah and his Kingdom.

2. From without he could best see the condition of the nation, could study its hopes, understand its sins and dangers, and learn the way by which alone it could be saved. Lawlessness and crime were running riot through the nation. Even the religious leaders were contaminated. The wilderness experience was John's college and professional course for his life work. He was not a self-made man, but a God-made man.

His Call to Service. In the 15th year of Tiberius Cæsar, in the summer of A.D. 26, the word of God came unto John (Luke 3:2). In exactly what way the call came to him we do not know. But the times were ripe, the fire in his soul burned to blaze forth into action, and God made known to him that the time had come when, like his predecessor Elijah, he must burst upon the scene like a lightning's flash from the dull, rising clouds of danger.

The Scene. John Preaching. (1) We are looking upon the Wilderness east of the Jordan, near one of its fords. There stands John the Baptist speaking to the few who have come from near by, and are listening to his earnest words.

(2) We note his peculiar appearance, and his mode of living. His dress was like that of the great prophet Elijah in the popular mind. He was clothed in the coarse, rough cloth called sackcloth in the Scriptures. It was cheap, but admirable for keeping out the heat, cold, and rain. This mantle was girded around him with a leather girdle of undressed hide. His food consisted of locusts, and of wild honey.

The common brown locust is about three inches in length, and the general form is that of a grasshopper. They were very abundant. They are still used as food. They are sold at one cent a pound in Biskra, an oasis in the Desert of Sahara. Some of our western Indians, as the Piutes, eat locusts. Professor Riley, the government entomologist, was found one morning by a visitor eating locusts. They resemble fried oysters.

The honey was both pleasant and healthful. "So far as I know, no country in the world, unless it be Greece, can rival the hilly parts of Syria [for honey]; and the wild bees find secure shelter for any number of swarms in the innumerable fissures and clefts of the limestone rock which everywhere flank the valley."

Why John Lived in This Manner. (1) Because it was the perfectly natural way in which a poor man would live in the wilderness. It required little care and thought, and thus left him free to give himself wholly to his work.

(2) The moment the people saw him they would recognize John as a prophet, and even his enemies would have a wholesome respect for him.

(3) This mode of living aided him to be perfectly fearless and independent. He had little to lose by the opposition of the great, or to gain by their favor.

(4) It showed the people that he was absolutely sincere. He sought *them*, not theirs.

The Gathering Crowds. Soon the people came to John in great numbers, — representatives from all parts, city and country, and of all classes. Pharisees, Sadducees, soldiers, tax-gatherers, rich and poor, learned and ignorant. They went as the hungry go for food, and the chilly for fire, and the poor for plenty, as the doves gather in St. Mark's Square in Venice, at the hour when grain is scattered.

He did not go to them, they came to him. Compelling the people to come to the wilderness sifted them. The number of bitter opposers was less; there was less danger of hindrance from mobs than near a city.

Why Did such Crowds Come to Him? (1) His terrible denunciations of sin touched the conscience. They knew they were guilty. (2) John, with the denunciations of guilt, always also brought to them the way of salvation. (3) He was a real man, of sublime courage, for he not only told the truth to the ordinary people, but he condemned to their face the very leaders, the Jewish authorities; and, as Elijah to Ahab, said to King Herod himself, "Thou art the man" who is injuring your people by his bad example.

Illustration. Compare Luther, who, when pressed to stay away from the Diet at Worms, where he was to be tried for heresy, said to the messenger, "Go tell your



John the Baptist Preaching.

From an old print.

master that though there should be as many devils as there are tiles on its roofs, I would enter it." And again of his mortal enemy, Duke George, "If I had business at Leipzig, I would ride into Leipzig though it rained Duke Georges for nine days running."

(4) There was a general religious awakening and expectation. The Roman yoke was very bitter, and the people were hoping for a deliverer, and questioned whether John might not be the one.

John prepared the way for Jesus:

*First, by urging the people to repent,—*Turn ye, turn ye. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

The People. But the Messiah is coming. We are looking for him according to the Promise.

John. What do you expect him to do for you?

The People. We expect

him to deliver us from the Roman yoke. We expect him to "sit on the throne of David, and upon his kingdom" (Isa. 9), an independent kingdom in which all the glories foretold by Isaiah and the prophets shall be fulfilled.

John. But you are not doing the things which belong to God's kingdom.

Injustice, oppression of the poor, "devouring widows' houses, and for a pretence making long prayers," hypocrisy, revolutions, and the whole catalogue of sins and crimes named in the works of the flesh (Gal. 5: 19-21) shut those who commit them from God's kingdom.

They looked for an outward king, in outward splendor and prosperity, to which they could give an outward allegiance, but without a change in their moral conduct. Any one of whatever character can enter a worldly kingdom, or a Mohammedan Paradise, or even a place called heaven. But he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless he accepts the laws and principles of that kingdom.

The People. But we are the people of God. To us were made the promises; we worship in his temple; we read his word; we teach his ten commandments with the utmost zeal.

John. But you know that every promise is conditioned on righteousness, justice,

4. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

on love as the sum of the commandments; on the whole list of the Fruits of the Spirit. (See Gal. 5:22, 23.)

There is no possible way of belonging to the Kingdom of Heaven, but by being filled with its atmosphere, and doing the things that make the Kingdom of Heaven what it is. For there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Therefore I repeat again, Repent, turn from your evil way, for here is your only hope.

Any child can be led to understand this great truth. They experience at times what it is to disobey God's physical laws, as for instance the laws of health. From this experience they can realize the necessity of obeying God's moral laws, as the Ten Commandments, and the teachings of Jesus.

Illustration. Painting the Pump. There is a story of a pump in an old well which supplied a house with water. By some strange chance, the well became poisoned, and therefore dangerous to drink. The family reported the fact to the landlord, who said, All right, I will find a remedy. And he goes and gets some paint of another color and *paints the pump*. But those that drank of that well still fell sick or died. The only remedy was pure water in the well. What we need in order to be saved is not a change in outward forms, but a new heart, a new inward change, a right spirit that transforms our lives.

Second. John prepared the way by giving hope as well as warning. He proclaimed forgiveness, the remission of sins (v. 4) for all who would repent, and do works meet for repentance. So Jesus tells us that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him (that is, follows, obeys him as King, Leader, and Teacher) should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16). There is no other possible way. So in Ps. 103 our Heavenly Father tells us, as the heaven is high above the earth so great is his lovingkindness toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. And Isaiah (1:18) reports the Lord as saying, Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Always on the same condition that we turn and repent. By what a glorious hope John urged the people to repent! God's forgiveness is chiefly restoration to the family and favor of God. And this is a far higher blessing than the removal of suffering. Sin has set us in opposition to God, so that we do not feel at home in his presence. Forgiveness brings us close to the heart of God, into oneness with him. It gives us a new start in the spiritual life. It gives a new meaning to the love of God.

Illustration. Black Coal in the Sunshine. The thought often troubles us, how can any forgiveness take away the fact and the memory of sin? How can it remove the Cain-mark from our souls? Will not the black past be forever present, forever seen? One simple illustration has brought comfort. I have seen a black coal by the roadside, the very essence of blackness. I have seen the sun shine on that black coal, and I could no longer see the blackness because of the sun's radiance reflected from it. It was no longer a black coal, but a star of glory. So when we get to heaven, the wondrous love and wisdom of God and of his Son Jesus on saving such sinners as we have been, will make ourselves and every one, forget the sin on the shining of redeeming Love.

Nails in the Gate-post. Dr. Farrar, in his *Junior Congregation*, tells this story he heard when a boy. "A father said to his son, 'John, every time you disobey, I shall drive a nail in the gate-post.' It was not a long time before John saw a number of nails in the post. If a bad report came from school it was nailed to the post. At first John thought it was a good joke, but one day he saw a tear on his father's face as he drove another nail. Then John told his father he was sorry and would do better

7. And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

if he would forgive him. Then every time he obeyed, the father would draw out one of the nails. One day as John passed down the walk he threw up his cap and shouted for joy; the nails were all out of the post, and for that he was glad; but the nail-holes were all in the post, and as he passed the gate the nailholes were like eyes looking down into his soul. John had my sympathy. There was something not exactly right about that gate-post. The Bible told me that when God forgives He remembers our sins no more against us. The father, when he forgave John, should have put in a new gate-post. Our Father not only takes out the nails but He puts in a new post. The new post is God's love, and on it swings the gate to heaven."

Yet we must remember that crimes and injuries to others leave marks that no human power can restore.

Third. John confirmed the people who repented by a public confession through baptism. No one truly repents who does not also confess — to God the sins against God, to man the sins against man, ever also making restitution as far as possible. Any one who is ashamed of his allegiance, and espousal of a good cause, is almost certain to fall.

Fourth. The Soul-Mirror, which John held up before the people in order that they might see themselves as they really were.

"In one of the ancient court-rooms of Europe there was actually fixed a large mirror near the prisoners' dock, so that each arraigned culprit might look upon his own image as he sat there on trial as a felon." — C. G. Robinson, LL.D.

Some looking in John's mirror saw themselves as vipers (Luke 3:7). **O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** Look at yourselves and see that you are vipers, scorpions, full of deadly poisons, insidious, destroying the innocent. These were hard words, but true, and nothing more gentle could awaken their consciences. He did it to save them.

When some one condemned a Methodist minister for speaking so loud he replied, "I am not singing lullabies, I am blasting rocks."

Another saw in the mirror a fruit tree with an axe laid at its roots, and under the picture this legend (Luke 3:9), **Every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. . . . Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance** (Matt. 3:8).

Still another, looking in the mirror, saw a threshing floor, and one tossing the grain with a winnowing fan, while the wind blew. And the good grain was gathered into the garner, while the chaff, — the refuse, the useless, representing all who continue in sin, unrepentant, harmful, — was swept away by the wind or **burned with fire unquenchable** (Luke 3:17).

Again a picture from Malachi (3:3). A furnace, intensely heated; in it are gold and silver being refined from dross, and the master is looking on to see when the purifying is perfected.



A Refiner of Silver.

Fifth. John Prepared the Way for Jesus by Calling Attention to the Coming One, vs. 7, 8. According to Luke the people who heard John and saw the crowds following him, began to question whether he who was such a great prophet, the greatest of all

9. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

11. And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

prophets, with such noble and kingly qualities, were not actually the expected Messiah. But he publicly declared that he was far from it: *saying*, **There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose, the humblest service one could do for another. I indeed have baptized you with water. I have done all that a human being could do, but the Messiah, the Son of God, for whom I am only preparing the way. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.** ("Ghost" is old English for "spirit.") The mightiest power in the universe for renewing the heart and bringing in the kingdom of God. It would be as easy to bring springtime without the sun as the kingdom of God without the Holy Spirit. **And with fire** (Luke). The symbol of the Holy Spirit. The sun is fire, the source of all light and heat, purifying, health-giving, the source of beauty, comfort, life, fruitfulness, and all cheer and all power. The fire was visibly manifested on the day of Pentecost, as a symbol of the perpetual but invisible operation of the Holy Spirit.

IV. THE DIVINE ENDORSEMENT OF JESUS AS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD, vs. 9-11. *Jesus submitted to baptism by John like the other disciples*

of John. John had been baptizing and preaching repentance for about six months, when Jesus, now 30 years old, came from his Nazareth home to the place where John was baptizing in the Jordan, to enter upon his own great mission.

Here Jesus was baptized by John. Why? It was "to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). There were two parts to baptism,—the renunciation of sin, and the consecration to righteousness. Jesus had no sin to be forgiven, but he could place himself by his baptism as wholly opposed to all sins and wrongs, as entirely consecrated to righteousness and the holiness of the kingdom of heaven. He did what all men ought to do, placed himself publicly before the world as belonging to the kingdom of God, and everywhere and always opposed to the kingdom of Satan.

1. *The Descent of Power.* As

Jesus went up straightway out of the water, and while praying (Luke), he saw the heavens rent asunder, symbolizing the open communion of the Son between heaven and earth; and saw the Holy Spirit of God descending upon him, not only in the *manner* of a dove, but in the bodily shape of a dove (Luke 3:22), in order to give the visible impression that would strengthen and enforce the fact of the invisible reality. The dove was the symbol of the gentleness of the power of love, by which Jesus was to gain his victories. His power lay not in the storm, nor earthquake, nor fire, but in the still, small voice.

The greatest of all known forces are silent and gentle in their working like the light, like wireless, heard 4600 miles, without a sound between, like gravitation, of whose power falling mountains and "the crash of worlds," are but visible and small manifestations. Such are the forces that produce all the moral changes in the world.



The River Jordan.

Traditional site of the Baptism of Jesus.

2. *The Voice from Heaven.* The first of the three times, at three crises in the life of Jesus, Mark 1:11; Luke 9:35; John 12:28.

Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Thus God endorsed Jesus not only to the Jewish nation, but to his own consciousness. A citizen of a little country city, a worker at a carpenter's bench, without wealth, or rank, or social power, or civil office, or church authority, for him to undertake to transform the world! to overthrow empires! Nothing but the absolute assurance that he was the Son of God, that God endorsed him, that he was doing God's work in the power of God, could enable him to enter upon his mission.

LESSON II. — January 13.

JESUS BEGINS HIS WORK. — Mark 1:12-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Repent ye, and believe in the gospel.* — MARK 1:15.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; Heb. 4:14-16; Matt. 9:9, 10; Matt. 8:18-22; Luke 9:57-62; Acts 9:1-9.

Primary Topic : Jesus Chooses Four Helpers.

Lesson Material : Mark 1:16-20.

Memory Verse : Come ye after me. — Mark 1:17.

Intermediate Topic : Overcoming Temptation.

Memory Verse : 1 Cor. 16:13.

Additional Material : Matt. 4:1-11; 1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 2:18.

Senior and Adult Topic : How Jesus Faced His Task.

Additional Material : Matt. 4:1-11; Heb. 4:14-16; John 4:34-38.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Departmental plan of Grading furnished by the Improved Uniform Lesson section of the International Lesson Committee, belongs chiefly to the various graded Quarterlies for which they have selected appropriate subjects from the Uniform Scripture lessons to be used by the whole school.

This they can do, because all the 30 or 40 schemes of graded lessons are founded on the very same Scriptures wisely used in the Improved Uniform Scripture Lessons.

This volume proposes to explain, illustrate, apply to daily life, make clear, vivid, and attractive, the Scripture appointed for each lesson, so that teachers of all the grades can find help adapted to their scholars' needs.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

For what reasons was it necessary that Jesus should be tempted?

How can a holy being be tempted?

What were the three great temptations?

By what means did he gain the victory?

What was the gospel Jesus preached and lived?

Why did Jesus choose fishermen for his disciples?

What does "Fishers of Men" teach us as to the methods of bringing people to Christ?

LEARN BY HEART.

Matt. 4:3, 4, 8-10.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The temptation of Jesus, Jan. and Feb., A.D. 27.

The four fishermen-disciples were called to follow Jesus, April or May, A.D. 28, a year and a half after the baptism of Jesus.

Place. — The temptation of Jesus was in the Wilderness of Judea.

The call of the four was by the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Jesus Begins His Life Work.

- I. THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS, AND HIS VICTORY, vs. 12, 13. The three temptations.
- II. JESUS ENTERS UPON HIS MISSION IN GALILEE, vs. 14, 15.
- III. FOUR FISHERMEN OF GALILEE GO TO SCHOOL TO JESUS, vs. 16-20. FISHING FOR MEN.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

All the *Commentaries* on the first three Gospels, and all lives of Christ, take up the subjects of this lesson.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Dr. Farrar's *The Junior Congregation*, a book of sermons to children, has several excellent illustrations on the Temptation. See pp. 46, 96, 170.

Plato's *Republic*, Bk. 2, Ch. 3, gives us an excellent illustration from the story of Gyges' Ring, as a test. The great story of the Sirens, from Homer, well told in Dean Trench's *Poems*, "Orpheus and the Sirens," illustrating the two ways of overcoming temptation. Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, "The Prophet of the silver veil." Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian's battle with Apollyon. The Tract *Parley*

the *Porter*. Hawthorne's *Tanglewood Tales*, the story of Circe from Homer. Amos R. Wells' *Everyday Poems*, "A Hymn of the Wilderness."

THE LESSON IN ART.

John Watson's (Ian Maclaren) *Life of the Master* has a number of excellent pictures colored from direct observations in Palestine. Tintoretto, in his "Temptation of Christ," in the Scuola di San Rocco, "makes the tempter a beautiful angel with an evil face."

The Temptation of Jesus, Ary Scheffer,* Doré,* Cornicelius,* Perugino, Botticelli, Domenichino, Morelli, Hofmann.*

Calling of the Fishermen, Basaiti, Ghirlandajo,* Barocci, Zimmerman,* Bida.*

JESUS ENTERS UPON HIS MISSION FOR WHICH JOHN HAD PREPARED THE WAY.

St. Mark's account of the early ministry of Jesus is very condensed. In the few verses of this lesson he covers a year and three months of the ministry of Jesus, from January, A.D. 27 to March, A.D. 28, when John the Baptist was imprisoned by Herod. He, like Matthew and Luke, omits the rest of John's work of preparation, and Jesus' ministry in Judea, probably because none of them were familiar with it.

Three very important and distinct events are recorded.

Verses 12, 13, give the story of Jesus' temptation and victory.

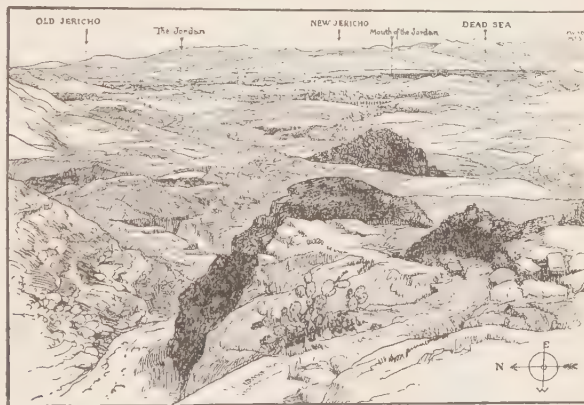
Verses 14, 15, relate the character of his preaching, and his entrance upon his great Galilean ministry of nearly a year and nine months.

Verses 16-20 describe how he called four Galilean fishermen to be his permanent assistants, and to be trained for their great work after Jesus ascended to heaven.

I. FIRST. THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS IN THE WILDERNESS, vs. 12, 13; Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13. THE LONG CAMPAIGN. Jesus was not yet

quite ready to enter upon his full mission. There were many questions for him to settle between his soul and God. He must be guided aright as to how he should accomplish his work as the Messiah. His goal was plain, but by what way should he reach it? The popular expectation was of a great and glorious worldly kingdom, of which Jerusalem should be the capital, and the Jews the rulers. Should he seek first this glorious outward kingdom, or give himself up to making the people good, with outward glories far in the distance? All the temptations were concerned with his work as the Messiah.

During these long forty days of fasting and prayer, of communion with his Father,



Pictorial Map of Wilderness of Judea.

of Bible study, of intense thinking, it was absolutely essential that he should come to right decisions. It is no wonder that at the end of forty days he was exhausted and faint with hunger.

The Young To-day need to partake of this experience. You stand at the gateway of the Future with all its possibilities. Life or death depends upon your choice. With earnest prayer, with the wisdom of God's word, with the help of the experienced, with intense earnestness, make your decision. See the vision of the two kinds of life pictured before you, and make your choice.

"We ourselves
When we commit a sin lose paradise
As much as he did. Let us think of this,
And how we may regain it."

— *Longfellow, on Adam.*

"If only we strive to be pure and true,
To each of us there will come an hour
When the tree of life shall burst into flower,
And rain at our feet the golden dower
Of something grander than ever we knew."

THE THREE TEMPTATIONS. The Tempter was Satan, but in what form did he come? He was "tempted like as we are." Hence it is not at all probable that he appeared to Jesus in bodily form, unless it was as an angel or a plausible stranger. The pictures of Satan as the fire-breathing Apollyon, or as one wearing a human form equipped with huge bat-like wings, horn, tail, and webbed feet, as on the doors of Pisa Cathedral, or as a black monster with tail, claws, and horns, as in St. Mark's, Venice, are mere allegories and symbols to make his real nature apparent and the impression deep. Such a Satan actually before us could never tempt us.

The battle with temptation was no sham fight. Jesus could have yielded. He had the same possibilities of choice that we have. "He himself 'suffered being tempted.' He felt the real heat of the fire, he felt the fascination of the real seduction. . . . Jesus of Nazareth had the real devil to meet and the real battle to wage, and the garlands on his noble brow were nobly won." — *Dr. J. H. Jowett.*

In order to understand the three great temptations which are now described, it is necessary that we see clearly three things in respect to each of them.

First. The Allurement. What was it that made the act so intensely desirable to an innocent and holy person like Jesus?

Second. The Wrong in doing what was proposed.

Third. The Means of Victory. The same for Jesus as for us.

I. THE FIRST TEMPTATION, Matt. 4 : 3, 4 ; Luke 4 : 3, 4.

Jesus. In the wilderness, intensely hungry. Around him on the ground are scattered stones resembling in form Oriental loaves.

The Tempter, drawing near. If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.

Jesus. Satisfying hunger is right. I have power to change stones into bread. But that IF! That throws doubt upon my being the Messiah, the Son of God! My whole mission will be a failure if I lose my faith. The world will be lost.

"Command that these stones become bread?" To do that would hinder my work, for in that the Son of God hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted (Heb. 2 : 18). Never, O Tempter, never will I yield. For the Word of God declares that **Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God** (Matt., quoted from Deut. 8 : 3) ; that is, by everything that God has told us will satisfy all the needs of body and soul.

There are other and better ways of satisfying hunger than by wrong-doing. There is something higher, better, more needful than earthly food, even obedience, faith, love, character, righteousness. Our bodies and our souls are full of desires, appetites, hungers, which are innocent in themselves, but which we are tempted to gratify in wrong ways, Satan's ways, in contradistinction to God's ways. This is the essence of most sins of the flesh, which work disease and death, as intemperance, gluttony, and social vices.

II. THE SECOND TEMPTATION. *A Dramatic Scene*, Matt. 4 : 5-7 ; Luke 4 : 9-12. The scene changes from the Wilderness to Jerusalem. **The devil**, the tempter, **taketh him**, probably in spirit or a vision, — a picture that would be familiar to Jesus, — and **setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple**, "some part of the temple, bearing the name of 'the winglet' overhanging a precipice." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

The Tempter then proposes a short, quick way of gaining his reception as the Messiah. Again comes the IF. **If thou be the Son of God**, as you think you are, prove it, prove it to yourself and to the people. "You speak of trusting God ; well, here is a brilliant act of trust for you." Take the course which will make the people receive you as the Messiah. **Cast thyself down** into the court of the temple, into

12. And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

the midst of the worshipping crowds and you will be welcomed as prophet and king.

What a charming vision was present to his mind. No long delays, no fierce conflict, no awful rejection by his beloved nation, no ages of slowly transforming the nations, but immediate triumph for the truth, God's kingdom bursting upon the earth in sudden and unspeakable glory.

Then the tempter assured Jesus that the plan was perfectly safe, for in the Scriptures he trusted it is written (Ps. 91 : 11, Septuagint version). **He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up.**

The Wrong of Yielding. (1) It was a misuse of God's promises, that did not pertain to the plan, exempting him from the natural laws which the human race he came to save must obey. (2) Again, it was disobeying the Scriptures defining what the Messiah should do. It was defying God's way for the coming of His kingdom. It would have destroyed the whole value and power of His salvation. It would have rendered impossible the kingdom of heaven he had come to establish.

Antonio, in *The Merchant of Venice*, says : — "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose." Nor is this the only instance.

The Victory of Jesus. Jesus met the temptation by a right use of the weapon Satan had used against him, — the simple statement that **THE ACT WAS WRONG**; and no right cause can succeed through wrong-doing. He found his answer in the Bible. **Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.** Thou shalt not twist and misapply a promise, and then demand that it be fulfilled in your way or else you will proclaim that God is untrue.

"He was willing to face peril of death, when God willed that he should do so."

III. THE THIRD TEMPTATION, Matt. 4 : 8-10; Luke 4 : 5-8. *The Battlefield.* The devil taketh him into an exceedingly high mountain, probably in a vision, or imagination, for there is no mountain from which can be seen by the natural eye all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. "It was Satan's masterpiece."

All these things will I give thee. In a measure Satan did have these things. Christ called him later "the prince of this world." On everything he had stamped his seal. "The trail of the serpent was over them all." The kingdoms were ruled largely according to Satan's principles. **Will I give thee.** I will use all my influence and power to make you the greatest worldly king. I will withdraw all my opposition to your kingship.

The Attraction of the Offer.

Milton, in his *Paradise Regained*, pictures with matchless skill "our Lord as lost in meditation upon the means by which his kingdom can be founded and built up."

"Victorious deeds
Flamed in my heart; heroic acts, — one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke.

Then to subdue and quell o'er all the earth
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power."

Here was the opportunity to gain, without waiting long centuries for wrongs to cease, the very things he had come on purpose to gain. There will be no slow and painful process, no conflict, no persecutions, no great self-denials, no martyrdoms, no soul lost; but the new era, the good time coming, will burst at once into noontide glory over all the earth. He came to vanquish Satan, and lo ! he seemed



Mt. Quarantana.

From a photograph.

Traditional place of temptation.

to surrender himself. It had greater power and attraction because it was the way the Jews expected the Messiah to rule, and the kind of kingdom they longed for.

Satan reveals the conditions on which this success could be obtained, while the dazzling picture gleamed before the eyes of Jesus, — all these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Not a bald act of bowing down before the Devil, which would repel even a common sinner ; rather such an act of worship as men give when they worship “the almighty Dollar,” by loving it better than God ; as they worship success, by placing it before duty ; as we make idols of pleasure, honor, rank. Christ was to give up his spiritual kingdom for a temporal ; he was to give up redeeming the world for the privilege of ruling the world ; he was to give up transforming the world into the eternal kingdom of heaven, for the few years of an earthly kingdom ; it was throwing away everything he came from heaven to accomplish. And with these would perish all the best things of the world.

The Victory. The moment the tempter, who came like an angel of light, made known his conditions, his true nature as the Adversary of all good was revealed, as if touched by Ithuriel’s spear, in Milton’s picture of the temptation in the Garden of Eden, — the spear that made whomsoever it touched throw off all disguises and stand forth in his true nature.

Jesus immediately answered, Get thee hence, Satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve (from Deut. 6 : 13).

And the victory was won. And, behold, angels came and ministered unto him, supplied him with food for body and spirit.

Milton thus celebrates this victory :

“Straight a fiery globe
Of angels on full sail of wings flew high . . .
Then in a flowery valley set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine.

Ambrosial fruits fetched from the Tree of Life,
And from the Fount of Life, ambrosial drink.
. . . And as he fed, angelic choirs
Sung heavenly anthems of his victory.”

POINTS OF CONTACT WITH OUR DAILY LIVES.

1. The greatest battles, the greatest victories, the greatest heroes, are found in connection with overcoming temptation. Marathon, Thermopylæ, Waterloo, pale before the great spiritual battles of the world. “Jesus fought the greatest battle which ever occurred on earth, and won the world’s most renowned victory.” — *James Farrar*.

“For he wrestled not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

2. Distinguish between temptations and tests. Temptation is the testing of a person with the purpose and desire of making him yield and do wrong. Testing is a means of finding out what a man is with the hope that he will stand the strain, for the purpose of knowing what he can do, how far he can be trusted, and helping him to be better and more useful. Satan and bad men tempt. God and good men never tempt, but test, and transform bad men’s temptations into trials and tests.

Illustration. The Test of Gyges’ Ring. Plato, in his *Republic* (Bk. 2, ch. 3), uses as an illustration the story of Gyges’ Ring to test what is real justice, and what is only apparent. Plato’s story is that a certain Lydian shepherd (about B.C. 600) found in some strange way a gold ring. Coming with this ring on his finger into the meeting of the shepherds making their monthly report of their flock to the king, “he happened to turn the stone of the ring towards himself into the inner part of his hand ; and when this was done he became invisible to those who sat beside him, and they talked of him as absent ; and astonished at this he again handled his ring, turned the stone outward, and on turning it, became visible.” He made trial of this several times, and found that it always had the same power. Using this power of invisibility, he entered the palace, slew the king, and took possession of the kingdom, for no one could know that he was guilty. Such a ring would be a test of the righteousness of men. A truly just man would be just even when no one would know his wrongs if he committed them. The man who was only seemingly and outwardly just, would commit crimes if he could do it without discovery.

3. Jesus has taught us to pray to the Father : “Lead us *not* into temptation.” How does this agree with the Spirit’s leading him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil ?

This world is full of temptations, and the wilderness was by far the best place in which to fight the battle with temptation ; but the Spirit did not tempt him. Any

one who goes into temptation for the allurements in it, because he loves the attraction, or walks into it with no high moral motive, but in his self-confidence, that he can resist it, — such a one is already more than half fallen. But when temptations come to us in the line of duty, he does not tell us to run away, but to fight the battle and overcome as he did.

"When the fight begins within himself
A man's worth something. God stoops o'er his head,
Satan looks up between his feet — both tug —
He's left, himself in the middle: the soul wakes and grows."

— Browning.

"Pray, 'Lead us into no such temptations, Lord?'
Nay, but O thou whose servants are the bold,
Lead such temptations by the head and hair,
Reluctant dragons, up to who dares fight,
That so he may do battle and have praise."

— Browning.

Read Ephesians 6: 3-17; "Put on the whole armor of God," etc.

4. "All who would become strong and useful must gain their power largely through victory over temptation. It is thus that the soul 'builds itself larger mansions.' It is a chief factor in education, transmuting the base metal of each individual into the nobler."

There was no other way of opening the door to man's highest possibilities, his fullest development, his purest holiness, his greatest happiness, his largest usefulness.

"One ship drives East, another drives West,
While the self-same breezes blow;
'Tis the set of the sails, and not the gales,
That bids them where to go."

"Like the winds of the air are the wars of the fates,
As we journey along through life;
'Tis the set of the soul that decides the goal,
And not the storm or the strife."

It is this fact of the creative power of choice, that shows us how temptation, which always demands a choice between good and evil, is so necessary in building up character, and character in its largest sense is the man.

Illustration for Boys. "A little boy was much impressed by the story of St. George and the Dragon, which his mother had been reading to him; and the next day he said to his father:

"Father, I want to be a saint."

"Very well, John, you may be a saint if you choose; but you will find it very hard work."

"I don't mind," replied John, "I want to be a saint and fight a dragon. I am sure I could kill one!"

"So you shall, my boy."

"But when can I be one?" persisted the child.

"You can begin to-day," said his father.

"But where is the dragon?"

"I will tell you when he comes out."

"So the boy ran off contentedly to play with his sister."

"In the course of the day some presents came for the children. But John did not like the one he had. He thought his sister's was much nicer than his own, and he threw himself on the floor in a passion of tears."

"His father, who happened to be there, said quietly, 'Now, John, the dragon is out.'"

"The child stopped crying but said nothing. That evening, however, when he bade his father good-night, he whispered, 'Papa, I am very glad Catherine has the best one. I did kill the dragon.'" — *Dr. Farrar's Junior Congregation.*

II. JESUS ENTERS UPON HIS WORK IN GALILEE, vs. 14, 15. Nearly a year and a half intervenes between verse 13, when Jesus gained his victory in the wilderness, and verse 14, when we find him carrying on his mission in Galilee, whither



St. George and the Dragon. Ittenbach.

14. Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15. And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

16. Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

he went after Herod had put John the Baptist in prison, March, A.D. 28. These two verses are a brief statement of his Galilean ministry, a general title for the chapters following. Therefore, since the subject of these verses is discussed in the next lesson, we omit all reference to them at this time.

III. **FOUR FISHERMEN OF GALILEE GO TO SCHOOL TO JESUS.** VS. 16-20. The four men who are mentioned in these verses became acquainted with Jesus when he was introduced to the people when John baptized him in Jordan.



Christ and the Fishermen.

Zimmermann.

They all followed him soon after, as they went to the wedding at Cana. They were not at that time permanent and chosen disciples, but they and others were the material for discipleship. They were being tested. They did not follow him continually, but at times pursued their usual business as fishermen.

Now, a year and a half later, they were called to be with Jesus, for his training by education and practice. It was three or four months later before the whole twelve were selected to be his permanent helpers and disciples.

Since the whole Twelve, including these

four, will be the subject of Lesson VI, the special characterization of the four will be considered then.

Andrew and probably John were Jesus' first-named followers. Jesus bade them "Come and see," and they came, and spent some time with the Master, and went away convinced. Andrew immediately found his brother Simon, and brought him to Jesus, and John, the other disciple, was probably the one who brought his brother James to Jesus.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew has been very successful by acting on the plan of these two apostles. It has now (1917) 13,000 members.

Jesus, with divine insight, looking on Simon said, **Thou art Simon, thou shalt be called Peter, a Rock.** This was to be the ideal, the goal of character for the impulsive Simon.

Peter won his name at last, giving hope to us all.

Andrew was a man of steady business wisdom.

James was the elder of the two brothers.

John, a young man, the youthful Boanerges, was a "Son of thunder," like his brother James. But he became "the disciple whom Jesus loved," the very embodiment of love.

The four all lived by the lake of Galilee.

18. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19. And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20. And straightway he called them : and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

All four were fishermen.

Each one after his kind.

These Four Jesus called to be **Fishers of Men.**

They all left their nets and followed Jesus in this higher service.

Their Business was to Win Men to Christ and His Cause.

1. "No human occupation has ever so perfectly illustrated the art of 'soul-winning' as that of the fisherman. Patience, knowledge of the interests of his fish, knowledge of the bait that will attract fish, faith in things unseen, skill, delicacy of touch, refusal to be discouraged, unlimited perseverance, conviction that he has not yet exhausted the possibilities of his art, — all these and more make the true fisherman. They reveal the moral qualities that we must have to lead our fellowmen to God. And the very maxims of this art disclose the true method for the Sunday School teacher." — *Sunday School Times.*

2. There are two methods of fishing, (1) one by the net, catching fish in large masses ; (2) the other by the line, catching them one by one. Jesus used both methods. He preached to large crowds at times, and yet it is most noteworthy how much of his best teaching was to one scholar or to a few.

3. Much of the best work is done by individuals in the church, carrying to other individuals the gospel invitation and the welcome to church, Sunday School, and prayermeeting. Dr. Trumbull, in his excellent book, *Individual Work for Individuals*, says, "I have been for more than twenty-five years an editor of a religious periodical that has had a circulation of more than one hundred thousand a week during much of the time. Meanwhile I have published more than thirty different volumes. Yet, looking back upon my work, in all these years, I can see more direct results of good from my individual work with individuals than I can know of through all my spoken words to thousands upon thousands of persons in religious assemblies, or all my written words."

4. *Ten Times One is Ten* is the title of a capital story by Edward Everett Hale, which has had a remarkable influence. It shows us clearly how the religion of Christ may be made to fill the whole earth by the personal influence of Christians. "Reaching one person at a time is the best way of reaching all the world in time. . . . Winning one soul at a time usually results in the winning of a multitude of souls in the process of time."

5. The fisherman attracts fish ; he cannot drive them. Every good thing that draws men, the work to which men are called, the meeting the needs, the finest Gospel courtesy, the help for the helpless, the kindness, all draw men. The services, the prayermeetings, the Sunday School should be so full of good, of the right spirit, of helpfulness and blessing, that people want to come.

6. The wise fisherman keeps himself out of sight. Mark Guy Pearse, the famous London preacher, once saw an old man fishing for trout, with great success. "You manage it cleverly, old friend," he said. "I have passed a good many below who don't seem to be doing anything." The old man lifted himself up, and stuck his rod in the ground. "Well, you see, sir, there be three rules for fishing, and 'tis no good trying it if you don't mind them.

"The first is, Keep yourself out of sight.

"The second is, Keep yourself further out of sight.

"The third is, Keep yourself further out of sight still."

This is an essential rule for the Gospel fisherman. The moment he has selfish motives behind his invitation, he fails.

7. *What can children do?* They can invite their mates to Sunday School, to children's meetings like the Christian Endeavor, Baptist Union, Epworth League, Pastor's classes. They can be organized in their classes for this work. They can show a Christian spirit. They can help make their Sunday School classes and young people's meetings interesting. They can help others in many kindly ways.

A Story for the Children. "Once upon a time, we are told, there lived a king, who had a little boy whom he loved very dearly. He gave him a beautiful room to live in, and pictures and toys and books with which to play. He gave him a pony to ride, and a rowboat on a lake, and servants. He provided teachers who were to give him knowledge that would make him good and great.

"But for all this the young prince was not happy. He wore a frown wherever he went, and was always wishing for something he did not have.

"At length, one day, a magician came to court. He saw the boy, and said to the king: 'I can make your son happy, but you must pay me a great price for telling you the secret.'

"'Well,' said the king, 'what you ask I will give.'

"So the price was paid. Then the magician took the boy into a private room. He wrote something with a white substance on a piece of paper. Next he gave the boy a candle, and told him to light it and put it under the paper, and then see what he could read. Then he went away.

"The boy did as he had been told, and the white letters turned into a beautiful blue. They formed these words

"'DO A KINDNESS TO SOME ONE EVERY DAY!'

"The prince made use of the secret and became the happiest boy in the kingdom." This is one of the Boy Scout laws.

LESSON III. — January 20.

JESUS AT WORK. — Mark I : 21-45.

PRINT Mark 1 : 21-34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day.* — JOHN 9 : 4.

Additional Material for Teachers: Matt. 4 : 23-25 ; Luke 4 : 16-22, 31-44.

Primary Memory Verse : And he healed many that were sick. — Mark I : 34.

Junior Memory Verse: Matt. 4 : 23.

Intermediate Topic : The Power and Sympathy of Jesus.

Memory Verse : Gal. 6 : 2.

Senior and Adult Topic : Jesus Meeting Human Needs.

Additional Material: Matt. 9 : 35-38 ; 11 : 28-30 ; Luke 8 : 1-3.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson is a series of scenes or pictures illustrating the work which Christ came to do in this world, and which meets every human need. They set an example for his disciples for all time.

They are full of instruction for all ages, from the oldest adult to the youngest kindergarten child; and it is for each teacher to select the special portion best adapted to the scholars in his class, and present them in the most picturesque form.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A.D. 28, in April or May, in the second year of Jesus' ministry. Soon after the imprisonment of John the Baptist.

Place. — At Capernaum as his headquarters, but extending throughout Galilee.

LEARN BY HEART.

Luke 4 : 18, 19 ; Matt. 4 : 23.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Moving Pictures of Jesus at Work, Preaching and Healing.

INTRODUCTION. The Bible of St. Mark.

- I. A MOVING PICTURE, — JESUS PREACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT CAPERNAUM, vs. 21, 22.
- II. SECOND SCENE, — A MOVING PICTURE OF A STARTLING INTERRUPTION THAT WAS A HELP TO THE PREACHING, vs. 23-28.
- III. A QUIET HOME SCENE, — HEALING OF THE MOTHER OF SIMON PETER'S WIFE, vs. 29-31.
- IV. SCENE IN THE EARLY TWILIGHT IN FRONT OF PETER'S HOUSE, vs. 32-34.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why Jesus spent so much of his time and work in Galilee.
 What was the subject and character of his preaching?
 What was his purpose in healing?
 What was the connection between his healing and his gospel?
 Were the cures miraculous?
 What is a miracle?
 How do miracles illustrate the Gospel?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

R. F. Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark*,
 "The Cartoon of Healing," Trumbull's
Studies in Oriental Life, "Calls for
 Healing in the East."

Pictures of Oriental houses such as
 Christ was preaching in can be found in
The Land and the Book, vol. 3 : 390, and
 2 : 434; Worcester's *On Holy Ground*,
 424 and 434.

Works on the Miracles of Christ, by
 Trench, Wm. M. Taylor, Arbp. Cosmo
 Gordon Lang, Prof. Laidlaw, Dean How-
 son. Burton's *Christ's Acted Parables*.

Geikie's *New Testament Hours*, "The
 Great Physician." *The Miracles of
 Jesus*, a study of the evidence, by E. O.
 Davis, B.Sc. *The Miracles of Chris-
 tianity*, by Prof. Johannes Wendland of
 Basel. Edersheim's *Life and Times of
 the Messiah*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The Bible of St. Mark (Venice), by
 Rev. Alexander Robertson. *The Stones
 of Venice*, by Ruskin. Nehemiah
 Adams' *Christ a Friend*. Whittier's
Poems, "The Master," — "The healing
 of his seamless dress."

THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ Teaching in the Synagogue, Bida.
Christ Healing the Sick, Hofmann,*
 West,* Schopenherr,* Doré's *The Vale of
 Tears*.

Christ Curing the Leper, Bida.*

THE BIBLE OF ST. MARK.

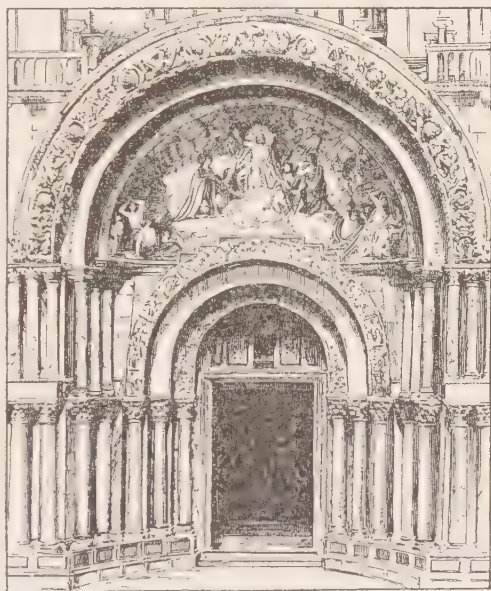
The Bible of St. Mark is an illustrated and illuminated Bible pictured on the walls
 of the marvellously beautiful church of St. Mark in Venice; so that the people, most
 of whom could not read words, could yet, no matter how ignorant, read the Bible
 story in the colored mosaic and
 fresco pictures of the Bible scenes
 which covered the walls of the
 church. "These walls necessarily
 became the Poor Man's Bible, for
 a picture was more easily read
 than a chapter."

The plan of this Picture Bible
 is very instructive. There are
 three parts.

First. The Façade, the entrance,
 "the chief external face of the
 building." On this is inscribed
 what is called the Title Page of
 St. Mark's Pictorial Bible.
 "Christ holds the place of honor
 on the title page. It is His name
 that is inscribed oftener and in
 largest letters upon it. HE IS
 THE KEystone OF EVERY ARCH
 OF EVERY DOOR BY WHICH THE
 CHURCH IS ENTERED. The Church
 cannot be entered but by Him,
 the Redeemer, Restorer, Creator,
 Teacher, Saviour and Master." —
Dr. Robertson of Venice. "It is
 the Cross that is first seen, and
 always burning in the center of
 the temple." — *Ruskin*.

Jesus himself said, **I am the
 door.** John 10 : 9.

Second. The Atrium, the great hall or court through which the people enter the
 Church proper, the splendid reception room. On the walls of this room are pictured



St. Mark's, Venice.
 Main entrance.

21. And they went into Capernaum: and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

scenes related in the Old Testament, as the stories of Creation, Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, to Moses.

The Old Testament is the preparation for understanding the New.

Third. The Church Audience Room, the Holy of Holies, in which by mosaics and frescoes are pictured New Testament scenes. These are culled mainly from the Gospel of Mark.

I have referred to the Bible of St. Mark because it is an excellent illustration of the value of the picturesque method of teaching. The story itself will be an interesting introduction to the lesson, each separate event in it being such that the teacher can present it as a vivid scene, or moving picture, that will be permanently impressed on the memory.

The older scholars may themselves imagine just how each scene must appear, before they consider what is the practical truth that can aid them to better and higher living.

I. A MOVING PICTURE, JESUS PREACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT CAPERNAUM. vs. 21, 22. They, Jesus and the four fishermen he had just called, went into Capernaum where for many months Jesus made his headquarters. And straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue. Jesus was a good church goer, and set us all a good example. It was the equivalent of our churches and their services.

"The lately discovered ruins of a synagogue in Capernaum are probably the ruins of the very synagogue in which Jesus preached, and which was built by the

Roman centurion whose servant Jesus healed (Luke 7: 1-10). The walls were 74 feet, 9 inches long by 56 feet, 9 inches wide, and 10 feet thick. It appears to have been better finished than any other synagogue in upper Galilee, and to have been ornamented more profusely." — Col. Edward Wilson.

The Interior of the Synagogue. The lectern, or reading desk is placed on a platform near the center of the room, and this platform extends back to the rear wall where is the closet where are kept the Hebrew rolls of the Law and the Prophets. The floor seats on one side are occupied by men only, but I see one young girl among them who for one year takes the place of her father who has just died. The women sit on the other side shut off from the view of the men by a partition 5 or 6 feet high.

The back seats of the platform were the chief seats of honor for which Pharisees and scribes strove so eagerly.

One of the rulers goes down among the audience, and invites Jesus to come up to the platform and speak to the people.

Jesus is a young man of 31 to 32 years, dressed like the ordinary people, but of very attractive appearance, and musical voice.

He goes to the platform and calls for the roll of Isaiah.

The attendant brings it to him. He stands up and finds the place he desires.

His Text: Isaiah 61: 1, 2.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are

bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (as quoted in Luke 4: 18, 19).

His Preaching. When he had read these words, he closed the book, returned it to the attendant, and sat down as was the custom of the synagogue. Sitting gave a familiar, conversational tone to his preaching as if he were talking from his heart to friends and neighbors. There were no flights of oratory, but a wonderful message, illustrated by parable and story, so simple that all could understand. He preached in every possible method by which he could reach the hearts of men. He proclaimed



Roll or Book.
Closed.

23. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24. Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

to great crowds; he taught small classes; he conversed with individuals. He sowed the good seed in public gatherings indoors, out of doors, by the wayside, in upper rooms, in the synagogues. He preached to rich and to poor, to publicans and sinners, to Pharisees and rulers.

The Gospel for the poor is clearly shown by comparing the advantages of the poor in Christian lands with their condition in all others. In no other lands are the poor so near the rich in advantages. The Gospel is for the poor: they can worship in the most expensive buildings. Printing has made Bibles so cheap that the poorest can read them, and learn to read them in free schools. Public libraries and galleries of art are open to all. The poor can ride as fast in railroad cars as the rich, can have their daily papers, can enjoy music and home comforts such as only kings and princes could have a few hundred years ago. Much is yet to be done in carrying out the spirit of the Gospel; but it is well to see what wonders have already been accomplished.

To heal the brokenhearted. To give comfort to those who are overwhelmed with sorrow. Christ heals them by his own love, and revealing his Father's love; by immortal life, for which sorrows prepare us; by the promise that all things shall work together for good to those that love him.

Deliverance to the captives. To all captives, whether in material or in spiritual captivity. Witness what the Gospel is doing for prison reform, for the abolition of slavery and the slave trade, for the Indian races. But especially for the captives of sin and Satan, the slaves of evil habits, of intemperance, of fashion, of worldliness, does Jesus sound the trumpet of deliverance.

Sight to the blind, both bodily and spiritually. Recall what wonders have been done for the blind; what a long list of great things has been done by the blind.

"My vision hast Thou dimmed that I may see Thyself alone."

"Visions come and go; shapes of resplendent beauty round me throng."

— *On Milton's Blindness.*

But it is a greater misfortune to be blind to the spiritual world, and its infinite realities. Christ opens the spiritual eyes, to new life, clearer visions of duty, of God and of truth.

One example of his preaching is given in Matt. 11 : 28-30. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Note that the yoke stands for service, and is "an instrument for making service effective." It enables one to do a great deal more than he could do without the yoke. As citizens we must belong to some country, and bear the duties of its burdens and service. The service of Christ as our Saviour and King, the service for his kingdom of heaven, is his yoke. Remember that a yoke means service with another. We serve as a fellow worker with Christ. His yoke is easy. "It is the spirit in which he worked," the spirit of cheerfulness, of delight in his work. His yoke is infinitely better than the yoke of sin, even when Satan offers instead all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them.

What the People Said about Christ's Preaching. He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

They were astonished at his teaching, for his word was with power. He was using spiritual forces. He had God behind him.

II. SECOND SCENE. A MOVING PICTURE. A STARTLING INTERRUPTION THAT WAS A HELP TO THE PREACHING. THE DEMONIAK IN THE SYNAGOGUE, vs. 23-28. In the synagogue Jesus was still preaching the Good News to a rapt audience. In the meantime a man possessed by an unclean spirit had crept into the crowded synagogue unnoticed by those in charge of the meeting.

"Suddenly, a voice burst out — a shriek rather than a voice — that stopped the Speaker and hushed the audience into death-like silence," — *Let us alone!* What

25. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28. And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? The Saviour, so far as appears, had not been formally interfering with the demons; but his preaching was contrary to their nature, his character was opposed to theirs, his whole mission was the exact opposite of theirs; so that everything he did and said tended to destroy their influence.

Let us alone is still the cry of wicked men. Why trouble us with your reforms? Let us sell rum, let us ruin the innocent, let us oppress the poor, let us tempt the young, let us gamble, and cheat, and drink, and grow rich by vice, in peace. You churches and ministers and reformers attend to your own business and let us alone.

While the audience is shocked at the sudden interruption, let us look for a moment at this man possessed by an unclean spirit. Good spirits and bad spirits are ever around us. Demons are called unclean because they are impure, unholy, defiling, and produce such effects both in the body and spirit of those whom they possess. The outward filth was a type of the moral defilement. Even how our spirits dwell in our bodies is an unsolved mystery. How demons may enter into us we do not know. But it is usually connected with insanity or disease, often caused by certain vices. But no evil can enter without the man's own permission. There seems to be double personality, as in the case before us. It is a terrible thing to yield one's self to the powers of evil, either in body or spirit.

The Unclean Spirit speaks again: **I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.** As belonging to the invisible world, he knew something of what was going on there. As a part of the principality of evil warring against God and good, he was aware of the massing of the divine forces at this time in the world.

Jesus: Hold thy peace. Literally, "be muzzled." "It is a word for a beast." — *Morison*. The same verb is used in the calming of the winds and waves of Mark 4 : 39. **And come out of him.**

The Unclean Spirit, when he had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, came out of him (v. 26). Luke says that the demon threw the man down in the midst of the crowd (Luke 4 : 35). This proves the malignity of evil spirits and their great power to do mischief. They will do all the harm they can, and only cease when compelled by the command of Christ.

The Audience in the synagogue were all amazed at the sudden and complete recovery. **What word is this?** "The commanding word of Jesus followed by such astounding results." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **A new teaching!** "a teaching with authority, a new style of teaching"; a teaching illustrated by deeds. **For with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits and they do obey him.**

This rescue of one who was suffering from one of the greatest evils that can befall a human being was the *proof* of the Good News Jesus had been preaching. It was the completion of his sermon. "The miracles of healing are the appropriate signs and seals of the glad tidings of salvation — as redemption-miracles they are the true credentials of a divine Redeemer." — *Professor Laidlaw*.

III. A QUIET HOME SCENE. THE HEALING OF PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER, vs. 29-31. *Capernaum. After the Sabbath morning service. At the house of Simon Peter, who was married and had a house as well as a fishing boat. Jesus, when he left the synagogue, went with his four disciples to the home of Simon Peter, which probably was not far away. It seems that this being his first visit there, he was told that Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever. Luke calls it a great fever, of a severe, malignant, and dangerous type. "The quantity of marshy land in the neighborhood, especially at the entrance of the Jordan into the lake, has*

29. And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

31. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32. And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33. And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

made fever of a most malignant type at times the characteristic of the locality, so that the physicians would not allow Josephus, when hurt by his horse sinking in the neighboring marsh, to sleep even a single night in Capernaum."

Jesus took her by the hand. To express his kindly sympathy and courtesy, and to make it evident that the miraculous cure came from him. Luke adds that *he rebuked the fever*, commanded it to go as if it were an enemy. **Immediately the fever left her.** Obedient to Jesus as in the case of the centurion (Matt. 8 : 8, 9, 13), and of the storm on the lake (Mark 4 : 30). **And she ministered unto them**, showing the completeness of the cure. This is one instance of the eternal power of Jesus to bless the home.

Here Jesus could rest with his disciples while they and the household could "eat and drink and in communion sweet quaff immortality and joy."

IV. SCENE AT EARLY TWILIGHT IN FRONT OF PETER'S HOUSE AND IN THE STREETS AND SQUARES OF CAPERNAUM, vs. 32-34; Matt. 8 : 16,

17; Luke 4 : 40, 41.

And at even, when the sun did set (was setting), they brought unto him to the door of Peter's house (v. 33). The multitude came after sunset, (1) because the heat of the day would have been too distressing to the sick; (2) because they did not wish to violate the sacred rest of the Sabbath day. At sunset the Sabbath ended; and so they felt themselves free to act. (3) By this time the news of Christ's miraculous

power, two examples of which are reported, would have had time to spread over the city. The people recognized both the power and the willingness of Jesus to heal, so that (v. 33) **all the city was gathered together at the door**, and (v. 34) **he healed many that were sick**. All of them, says Matthew. He laid his hands on every one of them as he did on the mother-in-law of Peter (Luke).



From a photograph by Wilson

Lepers by the Roadside.

"At even, ere the sun was set,
The sick, O Lord, around thee lay;
Oh, in what divers pains they met!
Oh, with what joy they went away!

"Once more 'tis eventide; and we,
Oppressed with various ills, draw near;
What if thy form we cannot see?
We know and feel that thou art here."

Healing in the East. "Imagine, if you can, the condition of a country in which there are no doctors, where the healing art is only practiced by a few quacks, who rely more on charms than on physic for their cures. Such is now, and such was Palestine in our Lord's day.

"There, until the medical missionaries were sent by several English societies,

there was not a physician in the land, and even now there are very few. In such a country as this, with sick and crippled in every village, picture the eager excitement when the news spread that there is a good physician arrived in town ; that he has healed a fierce demoniac by a word, and a great fever by a touch." — *H. D. Tristram, D.D., LL.D.*

Matthew refers to this work of Jesus as fulfilling Isaiah's picture of the promised Messiah, so that the people could see that that picture was fulfilled by Jesus in every line. "Himself took our infirmities, and bore our diseases," bore them as a burden, and bore them away.

1. Jesus bore these sick on his heart by his sympathy.
2. He bore the diseases away by curing them.
3. He bore them away by removing the sin that underlay them.
4. He bore them away by making them work spiritual blessings.
5. He bore them away by his teaching, his good news, his call to repentance, his revelation of the Fatherhood of God.

V. **JESUS ALONE WITH GOD IN PRAYER**, v. 35, after the strenuous labors of the day. In the morning, rising a great while before day, so that he might be alone with God. For he was weary with his labors, and more would be pressing upon him soon. He needed communion with God. He needed strength and refreshing from heaven.

A BRIEF PRACTICAL REVIEW FOR US TO-DAY.

I. The Individual and the Church and the Sunday-school should be as full of the Bible as the church of St. Mark, known and read of all men ; its spirit and truths shining forth in all we are and do ; our whole life preaching the Good News of salvation, of Christ, of forgiveness, of new life and love ; especially to the young.

II. This preaching and teaching must be put into practice in saving old and young from sin and all its evils. It must be the means of conversion, of new lives, of bringing the young to Christ, of casting out all the unclean spirits in the community. A church that does not make the community better is a failure. A Sunday-school's business is to lead the young to Christ, and reach all the neglected youth within its power and train them in the Christian life. What Christianity does for sinners is the test of its value.

III. Christ's going into the home of Peter and restoring the sick mother to health is an illustration of the individual giving courage and cheer to neighbors and friends in any kind of need. Simple, beautiful, sincere, neighborly, Christian friendliness, may be used with great advantage.

IV. The wider work of Christian churches and individuals is taught us by the great numbers of sick and suffering people Jesus healed at the setting of the sun. Christianity blesses the body, and through the healing of the body uplifts the soul.

Christ tells us that those who believe in him shall do greater works than he, and it is true that Christ in his Christianity is doing on a far larger scale the works of Christ than it was possible for him to do in Palestine. The kindly feeling, the desire to help, the increased skill, which spring up under Christianity as flowers and fruits grow in the sunshine, have made Christ's works through his people greater than those he wrought on earth. They are not miracles, but are better than the power of miracles, as the prolonged sunshine is better than the flash of lightning. Blind asylums have opened many eyes, and caused many people to read and work even without sight. Hospitals have cured and cared for multitudes of sick and insane. We cannot raise the dead to life, but the average length of life has been greatly increased. The day laborer has more of the best things in the world — books, libraries, churches, railroads, telegraphs, newspapers — than kings have in heathen lands.

This work of Christianity is the proof of its divine origin and guidance. It is because the Christless nations have come to Christian lands and have seen what Christ has done for them, that there is such an awakening of these nations as has never been seen before. There has been a marvellous change in the general attitude toward missions in the last few years. Its great work has risen above the unseen foundations as a lighthouse above its rock-built foundations beneath the waters. People who laughed at missionaries as a second-rate, feeble folk, find that they have been statesmen and heroes ; whole nations are being changed into a higher class by their work.

The Laymen's Movement, the Young People's Missionary Movement, the Forward Movement, the Students' Volunteer Movement, the Women's Boards, and their Mission Studies, the great number of intensely interesting books on Missions, the missionary work of the Young People's Societies and the Sunday-schools, — of all denominations, — are a great army of Light-Bearers to all parts of the world. All must be trained to give to missions. A writer in the London *Sunday School Chronicle* says: "If we are to save our nation we must get hold of the boy and convert him. And when they have got hold of the boy they must make him a potential saviour in his whole after life."

So John R. Mott says: "The leaders of the time in the things of religion realize that they must go right down to the bottom, and begin to educate a generation of boys and girls with vital Christian principles and an international mind."

An Illustration. How 1200 Boys Added \$20,000,000 to the Wealth of Ohio. In the *American Magazine* Stanley Johnson has a series of articles entitled "Youth Leads the Way," in which he reports many new and wonderful facts about the developments in agriculture recently made in this country by boys and girls.

"Twelve hundred boys in the summer of 1914 added \$20,000,000 to the productive wealth of the State of Ohio. This was their response to the call for help. They were the corn-club boys of the Buckeye State. They raised the average yield of corn per acre from 35 bushels to 81, a gain of \$20,000,000 a year to the State," says A. P. Sandles, president of the Ohio Agricultural Commission. — *From the Christian Endeavor World.*

It is for our young people trained in the Christian life in Church and Sunday-school to increase their zeal and devise means for larger fruitfulness in fulfilling the mission of Christ to both bodies and souls of the people around them, and to every land within the reach of their gifts and prayers.



The Student Christian.
Modelled by Mr. Daniel C. French.

LESSON IV. — January 27.

JESUS FORGIVING SIN. — Mark 2:1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins.* — MARK 2:10.

Additional Material for Teachers: Ps. 32; Luke 15:11-24.

Primary Memory Verse: Forgive us our sins. — Luke 11:4.

Intermediate Topic: Jesus Healing Soul and Body.

Additional Material: Luke 7:36-50.

Senior and Adult Topic: Jesus Meeting Man's Deepest Need.

Additional Material: Matt. 1:21; Luke 7:36-50; Heb. 7:25.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson is one of the most dramatic and spectacular in the Bible. In a Sunday-school address I heard Dr. A. F. Schauffler use this incident as an illustration of how to tell a story by imagining what one would naturally do. The roof had been broken through, the palsied man had been let down among the audience, — and then he asked what the four men on the roof would naturally do. To answer this he lay flat on the platform and peered over the edge as if looking through the hole in the roof to see what Jesus would do.

Have your scholars see with their imagination the story of this lesson as vividly as if they saw the whole scene with their physical eyes.

LEARN BY HEART.

Ps. 32 : 1, 2; Luke 15 : 20-24.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — May or June, A.D. 28. The second year of Jesus' ministry. A few weeks after the last lesson; during which he was preaching and healing in the surrounding country.

Place. — Capernaum, while Jesus was preaching in a house in the city.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Jesus Cures a Man Sick with the Palsy; Body and Spirit.

SCENE I. JESUS PREACHING IN A PRIVATE HOUSE, vs. 1, 2.

SCENE II. A MOVING PICTURE. A PARALYTIC BORNE BY FOUR ENTERPRISING MEN TO THE HOUSE, vs. 3, 4.

SCENE III. JESUS FORGIVES THE SICK MAN, v. 5.

SCENE IV. JESUS PROVES THAT HE CAN FORGIVE SINS, BY MEANS OF HIS POWER TO HEAL, vs. 6-12.

SCENE V. THE NEW LIFE.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Oriental houses.

The palsy.

The four helpers of the sick man, — had they learned help and faith from Jesus?

An example of overcoming obstacles.

Had the four any right to break through the roof?

Why Jesus forgave the palsied man before he healed him.

What does forgiveness do for us?

Why is faith necessary both for healing and forgiveness?

How did Jesus prove his authority to forgive?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Dawn by Galilee, by Ralph Connor, pp. 20, 28. R. F. Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark*, "The Cartoon of Forgiveness." Books on the *Miracles of Jesus*.

Pictures of Oriental houses such as Christ was preaching in can be found in *The Land and the Book*, vol. 3 : 390, and 2 : 434; Worcester's *On Holy Ground*, 424 and 434. W. N. Hartshorn's *Jerusalem*, pp. 102, 198, and 202. Harper's *Classical Dictionary* has a fine series of plans and cuts of Grecian, Roman, and Pompeian houses, the latter belonging to about the time of Christ.

Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*, "Calls for healing in the East."

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Every Day Poems, by Prof. A. R. Wells, "Borne of Four." Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, the description of the burden of sin falling from Christian at the sight of the cross. Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 42. Prof. George Adam Smith's *The Forgiveness of Sins*. Dean Stubbs' *Poem*, "I sat alone with my conscience." The *Poem*, "Beautiful Snow" in *Snowflake Album* (Am. Tract Soc.). Moore's "Paradise and the Peri" illustrates one aspect of forgiveness. Whittier's *Poems*, "The Healer." Dante's *Purgatorio*. Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, vol. 2, sec. 1, "The house unroofed by faith." Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*, *Conscience*, is a remarkable statement of the need of forgiveness.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ healing the Paralytic, by Bida.*

SCENE I. JESUS PREACHING IN A PRIVATE HOUSE IN CAPERNAUM, vs. 1, 2. After the events in our last lesson Jesus with his few disciples made a tour throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people (Mk. and Matt.). The healing of the body and the healing of the soul always worked together, each reacting for good upon the other. This union is forever the method of salvation.

AND again he entered into Ca-pēr'na-ūm after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

2. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

At the close of the tour of several days, Jesus **entered again**, a second time (1: 21 mentioning the first), **into Capernaum**. "He has not been there apparently since he left it on the preaching tour in Galilee." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **It was noised that he was in the house**, some private house, probably of some considerable size to hold so many.

An Oriental House in Palestine. We cannot easily understand the situation and the events that follow unless we have a clear idea of the *Oriental house where the events took place*. "An American traveller in Palestine sees nothing that contrasts more strongly with the aspect of his own country than the appearance of the houses, both inside and out. He sees no wooden house nor shingled roof. Chimneys are likewise unseen, and both fireplaces and stoves are unknown." — *Dr. McGarvey in Lands of the Bible.*

The common houses are usually of one story, with a flat roof and outside stairs to the roof; for during the heat of the summer the family always sleep there. It is generally surrounded by battlements. "The better houses, about Christ's time, were built of well-dressed stones, the poorer ones of rubble. The walls were 18 to 24 inches thick. Mud was universally used as mortar." — *Dr. Kennedy in Hastings' Bible Dictionary.* They usually consisted of one large room, with no divisions except curtains. The better houses sometimes had an upper room covering a portion of the roof. The roofs are made of branches of trees, canes, palm leaves, laid upon rude rafters, covered with a thick stratum of earth or clay, and frequently rolled with a stone roller.

Mrs. Howie, of Syria, describes in the *Sunday School Times* a somewhat different formation of roof. "Red-tiled, zinc, and galvanized iron sloping roofs are to be seen in Syria now, but the old firm and substantial flat roof is still a common feature in Eastern dwellings. The substructure of such a roof consists of timber beams of about a foot in diameter each, and they lie parallel with, and at a distance of two feet from, each other [another authority says three feet apart, *Ed.*]. The spaces between the beams are closed by stone slabs or pine boards, above which is placed a layer of earth fifteen inches thick, which is rolled water-tight by a stone roller. . . . The old Eastern house is a single room, and may be thirty or forty feet long, and twenty or more broad, by ten or more high. No partitions, but stone or timber pillars, support the massive roof."

The Audience. The entire house was crowded full of people anxious to hear and see the wonderful young preacher. They thronged the house in their eagerness with Oriental freedom, not only to the door, but out into the street. "The arched gateway is so crowded it is impossible to gain entrance into the court. People are standing on tiptoe in the narrow street trying to look over one another's heads if perchance they may catch a glimpse of the wonderful teacher." — *Prof. J. P. Landis, in Otterbein Teacher.*

Luke tells us that these crowds came not only from every village of Galilee, but from Judea and even Jerusalem; and the interest was so great that Pharisees and doctors of the law were sitting by, not as friends but eagerly searching for some fault, or breaking of the Jewish law, in order that they might bring him before the Jewish Sanhedrin, their Supreme Court.

SCENE II. A MOVING PICTURE. A PARALYTIC BORNE BY FOUR ENTERPRISING MEN, vs. 3, 4. While Jesus was preaching the Gospel in one part of the city, in another house more or less distant a young man was lying helplessly sick, and tormented with the palsy. *Palsy* is a contraction of the word "paralysis," a compound of two Greek words signifying *beside*, and *to loosen*; hence, *disabled on one side*; "a disease which deprives the part affected of sensation or the power of motion, or both, according as the sensory or the motor nerves, or both, are attacked." "The term 'palsy,' or 'paralysis,' is used by the ancient physicians in a much wider sense than by our modern men of science. It included not only what we call paralysis, which is rarely very painful, but also catalepsy and tetanus, *i.e.* cramps and lockjaw. *Catalepsy* is caused by a contraction of the muscles in the whole or

part of the body, and is very dangerous. The *cramps*, in Oriental countries, is a fearful malady, and by no means infrequent. It is caused by the chills of the night. The limbs when seized by it remain immovable, sometimes turned in and sometimes out, in the same position as when they were first seized. — From *McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia*.

The latest edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* describes the various forms of this disease in medical language. Sir Risdon Bennett in *Diseases of the Bible*, says: "If, as sometimes happens, the arms are also paralyzed, these also would be useless, and the subject unable to help himself in any way. It seems probable that this last most serious and hopeless form of the disease characterized the case of 'one sick of the palsy,' who was borne of four."

Nothing is said about the man's character or previous life. But Dr. Horton in his *Cartoons of St. Mark* says, "There comes to my mind a fact to which my atten-

tion was called some years ago of a young man barely 21, lying in precisely the condition that is here described, unable to move a limb, the result of his youthful debaucheries. And one would gather from the unexpected course which Jesus pursues with this young man, that he suspected a similar one in this case of illness which was before him."

Put Yourself in His Place.

The young man must have known about Jesus and the wonderful good news he was preaching, and the cures he had wrought for the sick. This gave him hope if he could only come into the presence of Jesus.

If he had come into his present condition through his own riotous living, his sufferings would tend to make him bitterly repent of his sins, and long to live a purer and better life.

Like the Prodigal Son in Jesus' parable he had gone into a far country, far from the kingdom of God. He had wasted the living his Heavenly Father had given him, and a mighty famine arose in that land, so that the best he could do was to feed on swine's food. At last he came to himself. He had visions of his old home, and his generous Father, while he was perishing with spirit-



The Prodigal Son in a Far Country.



Return Home of the Prodigal Son.

ual hunger. He was humble and penitent, and longed to go to his Father.

Doubtless the palsied young man was hungering with penitent longing for a new life, such as Jesus had bestowed on many.

Note. The Teacher may well read to his class Luke 15: 11-19.

If the palsied man was an ordinary man, and was not a prodigal son, yet his sufferings would lead him to look more carefully upon his past life, and find many sins and failures for which he was sorry. He was far from what he might have been, and ought to have been, and hoped to be.

Sickness and trouble are instruments in God's providence for leading us to realize our sins and needs. They compel us to turn away for a time from the rush and ex-

3. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

citement of worldly business and pleasure, and in quietness look at our hearts and lives. Who of us but must agree with the poet:

"I sat alone with my conscience
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased.
The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,

And things that I thought were dead things
Were alive with a terrible might;
The vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face,
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that silently solemn place."

—Dean Stubbs of Ely.

The Four Enterprising Friends. These were doubtless friends and acquaintances of the paralytic, who had seen what Jesus had done for the sick, and were inspired with some of His spirit, and were glad to help the unfortunate man.

They would first obtain a litter or stretcher. Luke calls the bed *klinidion*, "a small couch or litter, so light that a woman could lift and carry it away. Thus, in the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes, 916, Myrrine says: 'Come, now, let me carry our couch' (Luke's word)." — *Vincent*. On this they would place the sick man's bed, "which, at any rate that of persons in the condition of life here spoken of, is not a very elaborate affair, — only a double quilt and a coverlet, which can be all rolled together in a bundle of moderate size, and easily carried."

R. Glover lays the most stress on the sick man's faith, as the source and bulwark of the faith of the four. "There are no sufferers whose affliction has been hallowed who are not centers of spiritual influence to some friends or neighbors around them." The four also had the faith that made them willing to take so much trouble to help a sick friend.

Helping others to the Saviour, as the four helped this helpless sick man. "There are cases which will need the aid of a band of workers before they will be fully saved, — a wife, a daughter, a friend, a Sabbath-school teacher, a pastor; all should unite in prayers and labors to bring such to Jesus." — *Spurgeon*. "Bushnell has a sermon on 'Four-Cornered Duties.' Let no one drop his corner of the blanket. The paralysed cases will never come without help. How much better to be one of the toiling four than one of the growling scribes." — *Bishop Warren*.

The four men, one at each corner of the litter, moved slowly through the streets of Capernaum till they reached the house where Jesus was preaching.

But when they reached the house they could not come nigh unto him for the press. The crowds filled not only the house, but the doorway out into the street. The four were not discouraged, but leaving the crowd they went up the usual outside stairs carrying the sick man with them on to the roof, which they uncovered, literally *dug through*, the flat roof being made of branches and twigs covered over with earth, which could be easily dug through, and as easily repaired. "The whole affair was the extemporaneous device of plain peasants, accustomed to open their roofs, and let down grain, straw, and other articles, as they still do in this country. I have often seen it done, and done it myself to houses in Lebanon. I have the impression, however, that the covering, at least of the *lewan* (court), was not made of earth, but



Carrying Beds on the Head.

5. When Jē'sus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

of coarse matting . . . or boards . . . or stone slabs that could be quickly removed." — *Thomson, Land and Book*. They let down the bed, the mattress, by the four corners. The roof was so low that no cords were needed, but those below received the man from the hands of the four on the roof, and placed him in front of Jesus.

Note. Obstacles in the way do not mean that we are going in the wrong direction, or that God wants us to stop. Frequently their purpose is to strengthen our faith, to prove and test our faith. They may increase our earnestness and develop our powers and thus fit us for larger blessings.

"By any way, however rough it be,
By any way, however thronged it be,
By any way, however steep it be,
O Good Physician, if I get to thee."

— *Refrains of Amos R. Wells' fine poem, "Borne of Four."*

Question. Was it right and honest to break through the roof of another man's house? Did they make it good? Was the owner more than glad to have it done?

The Story Visualized. Dr. A. F. Schaufler in his book, *The Pastoral Leadership of Sunday School Forces*, uses this lesson as an illustration of the right use of the Imagination in Teaching. "What is the underlying principle by which we may reproduce the scenes of the past in their detail, and make them living? This, — *that men act always, in similar circumstances, in the same way.* . . .

"In our days, if a crowd wants to get into a building very badly, that crowd will press and push and jam. If the desire is *tremendously* intense, they will be rude, and will trample on each other ruthlessly. That is the way a crowd acts to-day, therefore that is the way crowds acted in the time of our Saviour. . . .

"They were absorbed in his teachings, and while every square foot of room inside was occupied, a crowd was packed against the door, listening. At this juncture, down come these four men with their friend. What happened now? Well, what would you do if four of you had a friend on a mattress, and you wanted to get him in? I should begin by courteously saying:

"'Friends, we want to get in with this sick man. Now won't you please make way?'

"But the crowd was too dense.

"I fancy I hear one of the four saying:

"'Boys, it's no use. We have got to take him home and try another time.'

"And then I don't think I'm extravagant if I say that one of them would say:

"'I've brought him here, and I am going to get him in. We'll take him through the roof.' . . .

"So they got him on the roof."

Then the Doctor pictures the audience inside as they hear the ceiling cracking, and every eye looks up instead of at the preacher.

"Down comes the man in front of the Master.

"Now what? Well, my brothers, if I had a man here on the floor in front of me, and you thought I was going to heal him, what would you people in the rear of the house do? You would rise instantly, and some of you would get on the benches promptly, to see. There were no benches in that Oriental room, but they rose to their feet. . . .

"Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.'

"Now look at the faces, and see what a change. They had all been full of curiosity, — now, on the part of some, it is anger.

"And the four on the roof above?

"They were lying flat on the roof, and if you had looked up from the room inside, you would have seen four faces looking down. . . . And when they saw their friend rise and go away, instantly the four faces disappeared, and they went down the staircase a world faster than they came up to greet their friend with 'Praise the Lord.'"

SCENE III. JESUS SPEAKS: SON, BE OF GOOD CHEER, THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN, v. 5. As the sick man was lying on his couch in front of Jesus, and the excited audience were pressing hard to see what Jesus would do, He transformed the interruption into an aid to His teaching. **And Jesus seeing their faith**

(Am. R.), (1) the faith shown by the four, in bringing the palsied man to Jesus, believing that He could heal him; their faith shown by their overcoming obstacles. (2) The faith of the sick man, shown by desiring to go to Jesus.

Faith overcame the difficulties in the way; faith led him to do as Jesus said, and take up what seemed an impossible duty; faith showed the condition of heart and mind which made it safe to grant forgiveness; the faith that loves and chooses God is the beginning of heavenly life in the soul. It is useless to forgive those who immediately plunge into sin again.

He said to the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer: thy sins be (are) forgiven thee (Matt. and Mk.). "Be" here is not imperative, but the old form for are. Son is "a word of endearment." "It denoted the outgoing of Jesus' love toward him; pouring hope and good cheer into his heart." Dr. Horton says: "Jesus, the Lord, simply announces His recognition of the fact that sin was the cause, by uttering this marvellous assurance. 'Child,' He says, looking down at him — and from the word 'child,' we may perhaps gather that the sufferer was still a young man — 'Child,' He says, 'thy sins are forgiven thee.' How wholly unexpected that!"

The Archbishop of York thus states it: "The Good Physician probed the secret, the unhealed wound of the soul, the aching of the sense of unforgiven sin: Son, I read the story of thy life. I hear the inward cry of thy spirit. I accept the penitence of thy remorse."

When Bunyan's Pilgrim came up to the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and a shining one said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." "Then was he glad and lightsome, and gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing."

Jesus grants him the greater blessing first, not only for his own sake, because he desired it most, or at least it was the blessing he most needed, but also as an impressive lesson to His hearers on the higher value of spiritual healing.

God's Forgiving Love. God loves to forgive, and He will forgive as soon as the sinner comes to that state of mind when forgiveness will do good to him, and at least not injure others. The atonement of Christ, and the condition of which forgiveness can be granted — faith in Him — are to induce sinners to repent, and to prevent even God's forgiveness from increasing the sin of the world.

"Forgiveness is not a judge's sentence of 'Not Guilty,' but a father's welcome to restored sonship. It is a restoration to life. Our sins check, thwart, destroy the fullness of the spiritual life. They choke the channels through which, from Christ the Source, the Spirit, the Life-giver, fills us with the currents of the true life. When, by repentance, the obstacles are removed, once again the stream of life flows in upon us from the Lord, and we live again." — *Archbishop Cosmo Gordon Lang.*

Two Bible Stories illustrating how earnestly God longs to welcome back His wandering children.

First Story. In Scene I we saw the Prodigal Son as a penitent, longing for his father and his home. Now poor, ragged, destitute, ashamed, he was on his way to his father's house. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. (Luke 15: 20-24.)

"One of the finest examples of the treatment of the return," says Dr. Vincent, "is by Murillo in the splendid picture in the gallery of the Duke of Sutherland. The repentant youth is locked in the embrace of his father. His pale emaciated countenance bespeaks the hardships of his husk-coveting time, and the embroidery on his tattered robe the splendor of his riotous living. A little white dog leaping up to caress him aids in telling the story.' Servants are there bringing in a light blue silk dress and the gold ring."

The Second Story is found in Luke 7: 36-50. The scene is in a Pharisee's house at a feast where Jesus was reclining at the table after the Roman manner. During the meal a woman of the city who was a sinner, came into the house, bringing an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment, while the master of the house had treated him with haughty discourtesy and neglect. Jesus, contrasting the two, said unto the man of the house: Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

6. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7. Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee ; go in peace.

Note. The teacher can tell the story more fully, with great effect.

Whiter than Snow.

"Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell;
Fell like the snowflake, from heaven — to hell:
Fell, to be trampled, like the filth of the street;
Fell, to be scoffed, derided, and beat.
Merciful God, have I fallen so low?
And yet I was once like this beautiful snow.

"Helpless and foul as the trampled snow,
Sinner, despair not! Christ stoopeth low
To rescue the soul that is lost in its sin,
And raise it to life and enjoyment again. . . .
O God, in the stream that for others did flow
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

The Story of a Wandering Son and a Father's Love. "Once a year in a certain mission in a certain city, a beautiful story is told. The man who tells it is still young, fine looking and prosperous. Wherever he may happen to be, he always goes back to his native city and the little mission on one particular day. The story he tells is this:

"Many years ago now, a boy came back to the city from which he had run away some time before. He came riding in a box car, drunk and penniless. The next



Anointing the Feet of Jesus.

Bida.

morning, while his brain was still dull, he stopped a couple of men on the street, and asked for money for a meal. One of the men looked closely at him, and then said to the other, 'I must ask you to excuse me. I recognize here the son of an old friend, and I must go with him.'

"But what he could not quite bring himself to say, in the shock of the recognition, was that it was his own son that stood before him.

"The father took the boy with him. He arranged his business so that he could be away from it, and gave up his life to his son. He never left him day or night, and never by word or sign rebuked him for the past, but put all the strength of his soul into the battle his boy was fighting. After six months, he asked the boy to go with him to the city mission one night; and that night the miracle was wrought, and the boy went out clean of soul, with his decision made. And year by year he comes back to tell his story, in the hope that its message may reach some other boy who has thrown away his life as he himself once threw away his own.

"What a picture the story gives of the Divine Fatherhood, seeking and striving with wandering children!" — *Youth's Companion.*

SCENE IV. JESUS PROVES HIS POWER TO FORGIVE BY MEANS OF HIS POWER TO HEAL, vs. 6-12. The Scribes and Pharisees in the house were ready to find fault with Jesus, and in their hearts accused Jesus of speaking blasphemies; for who can forgive sins but God only? Blasphemy is to slander God, to speak treason against Him, arrogating to himself what belonged only to God, thus making God a mere man. Blasphemy is practically uttered treason against God.

8. And immediately when Jēsus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9. Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*; or to say, *Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk*?

10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11. I say unto thee, *Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.*

12. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, *We never saw it on this fashion.*

8. Jesus perceived their inmost thoughts and answered them.

9. **Whether is it easier to say, etc.** "In our Lord's argument it must be carefully noted that he does not ask *which is easier, to forgive sins or to raise a sick man*; for it could not be affirmed that that of forgiving is easier than this of healing; but which is easier to *claim, this power or that*; to say, *Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk*? . . . It would be easier for a man equally ignorant of the French and Chinese languages to claim to know the last than the first. Not that the language itself is easier, but that in the one case multitudes could disprove his claim; in the other, hardly a scholar or two in the land." — *Arbp. Trench*. "Thy sins be forgiven thee" could not be put to the proof except by a long course of good living. But the saying "Arise and walk," could be tested on the spot. Both were divine acts. He that could do one divine act proved that he had power and authority to do the other.

10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy) . . . *Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.* Jesus' argument was a greater help to the man himself, than to either the Scribes or the multitudes. For it gave him the assurance that his sins were forgiven. He carried the proof in his own person. The command to take up his bed was a test and proof of the man's faith.

12. **And immediately he arose.** The cure was complete at once; a mark of its miraculous nature. **Took up the bed.** To carry such a bed rolled up under the arm is an every-day affair. **And went forth before them all.** Every one in that crowded room could see him and touch him. There could be no mistake. **Insomuch that they were all amazed.** Luke adds, "They were filled with fear." The miracle awakened a religious awe in their minds, such as men ever feel in the presence of a great and mysterious power. **And glorified God.** They ascribed the honor and glory to God, as the source of this beneficent power. The good deeds of God's children honor God, and lead the souls of men toward him. (Matt. 5:16.)

SCENE V. THE NEW LIFE. 1. Wherever this man went he would be pointed out as the one who had been restored and forgiven. He would be an example of what Jesus came to do for all. He would be a marked man, watched to see what change was made in his character and life.

2. The restoration to health and the results of his forgiveness were but the beginning of his new life. He had many a battle to fight with temptation, many a victory to gain. His whole life must be one filled with the Holy Spirit and steadily growing nearer to the kingdom of heaven.

Dante's Purgatorio is a wonderful description of what the paralytic's future life should be, and ours should be. Rising up from the Inferno (the depths of sin) he came to a stairway of three steps, — the first, a white marble stair so polished that "I mirrored myself in it as I appear (confession of his sins). The second step was of rough, scorched stone (contrition, deep sorrow for sin and guilt). The third step, flaming red as blood (forgiveness by the atoning blood of Christ) brought him to the first of the seven ledges, which circle around the Mount of Purgatory, one rising above the other till Paradise is reached.

"But first upon my breast three times, I fell," — in penitence for sins in thought, in word and in deed.

"Seven P's upon my forehead he inscribed with the point of his sword," and "see that thou wash these wounds when thou art within," he said.

Prof. Charles Eliot Norton interprets thus: "The seven P's stand for the seven so-called mortal sins, — *Peccati*, not specific acts, but the evil disposition of the soul from which all evil deeds spring, — Pride, Envy, Anger, Sloth, Avarice, Gluttony, and Lust. After justification these dispositions which have already been overcome must be utterly removed from the soul."

Dante, on the first ledge or circle, at length conquered Pride, and an angel removed the first P from his forehead, and he ascended to the second ledge. On each of the seven ledges one of the P's is removed from his forehead, the sign of his victory over the seven deadly sins. He drinks of the river Eunoe (the memory of good which its waters restore to the soul), "and is fit to ascend to heaven, renovated as new plants, renewed with new foliage, pure and disposed to mount unto the stars."

This is a vivid picture of the life the paralytic may have lived.

LESSON V. — February 3.

JESUS LORD OF THE SABBATH. — Mark 2:13-3:6.

PRINT Mark 2:23-3:5.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath.* — MARK 2:28.

Additional Material for Teachers: Ex. 20:8-11; Isa. 58:13, 14; Matt. 12:1-8; Luke 4:16.

Primary Topic: Jesus and the Sabbath Day.

Lesson Material: Mark 2:23-3:6.

Memory Verse: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. — Ex. 20:8.

Junior Topic: Jesus and the Sabbath Day.

Memory Verses: Ex. 20:8-11.

Intermediate Senior and Adult Topic: Our Day of Rest and Worship.

Additional Material: Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; Col. 2:16, 17.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

In teaching this lesson it is wise (1) to begin at verse 23, concerning the Sabbath, where the printing of the text begins. Verses 13-22 will then come into the general subject as illustrations or applications.

(2) It is wise to emphasize what *should* be done on the Sabbath, rather than what *should not* be done. In the ten commandments there are only two, — the 4th concerning the Sabbath, and the 5th on honoring parents, — that begin with positive duties. All the others begin with "thou shalt not." And there is good reason for the distinction.

LEARN BY HEART.

Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13, 14.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — May or June, A.D. 28, not long after the last lesson.

Place. — Capernaum, near the N. W. shore of the Sea of Galilee.

An Epoch in the life of Jesus, since about this time the rulers of the Jews began to be more antagonistic to him.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Sabbath made for man.

The ideal Sabbath in our day.

What Jesus did on the Sabbath.

The true principles underlying the duty of Sabbath keeping.

What difficult problems do we meet in our day?

Is there any difference in the Old Testament law in the fourth Commandment, and the principles enunciated by Jesus?

Was the fourth Commandment ever abolished?

Why, in our teaching, should we emphasize what we ought to do on the Sabbath?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How Jesus Kept the Sabbath Day.

- I. WHAT JESUS' EXAMPLE AND ACTIONS REVEAL TO US CONCERNING THE SABBATH. ELEVEN PARTICULARS.
- II. WHAT JESUS TAUGHT CONCERNING THE SABBATH. EIGHT STATEMENTS OF HIS TEACHING.
- III. IN VIEW OF JESUS' TEACHINGS AND PRACTICE, WHAT ARE THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE SABBATH QUESTION, UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, 4 vols.; *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, 2 vols.; and his one-vol. *Dictionary*, all have articles on the Sabbath.

Chapter III in Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark* is fine.

The Sunday Problem, — Its Present-Day Aspects, — Physiological, industrial, social, political, religious papers presented at the International Congress on Sunday Rest, at Chicago, 1893 (I. H. Earle, Boston). *The Sabbath and Man*, by J. Q. Bittinger (Pilgrim Press). *The Sabbath for Man*, by Rev. Wilbur F. Crafts (Authors' Pub. Co., Pittsburg, Pa., 6th ed.). "This book of Mr. Crafts is unique as a repertory of information as to the present state of Sabbath opinion and observance over the nominally Christian world." *The Civil Sabbath*, by the same author and publisher; a plea for the laborer's right to Sabbath rest.

For the old Jewish observance of the Sabbath, see Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, vol. II, pp. 783-7, and App. XVII.

"How Jesus Kept the Sabbath" in Dr. Burrell's *The Gospel of Gladness. The Sabbath Transferred*, by Chaplain John D. Parker, Ph.D. (East Orange, N.J.).

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Leigh Hunt's "The Sabbath for the Laborer"; Longfellow's *Divine Tragedy*, "First Passover," part IV; Plato's *Republic*, bk. 10, chap. 11, "The Marine Glaucus," an illustration of what the Pharisees did to the Sabbath. Burns' *Cotter's Saturday Night. The Rambler*, vol. 1, No. 30, has an allegory on Sunday observance.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Doré's* *Jesus and His Disciples Going through the Cornfield*.

Tissot's *The Pharisees and the Herodians*, and *The Disciples pluck Corn on the Sabbath*.

Bida's* *The Man with a Withered Hand*.

23. And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

In this lesson we can wisely begin with verse 23, and first consider the two discussions of Jesus with the Pharisees concerning the two ways of keeping the Sabbath; and in their appropriate places bring in the first ten verses assigned to the lesson.

I. WHAT JESUS' EXAMPLE AND ACTIONS REVEAL TO US CONCERNING THE TRUE WAY OF KEEPING THE SABBATH. FIRST. Mark 2:23-26. One

summer morning in Galilee Jesus and his disciples were walking along a public path through a field with standing grain on either side (there were no fences). They were doubtless on their way to or from the morning service in some synagogue. "The rabbinical law allowed no eating on the Sabbath, except in cases of sickness, prior to the morning prayers of the synagogue. A similar canon in the ritualistic churches of today forbids breaking the fast before partaking of the communion." — Abbott. Or they were on some mission of helpfulness for some one; perhaps to that synagogue where he soon after healed a man whose right hand was withered.



J. R. Wehle.

Jesus and His Disciples going through the Cornfield.

24. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

25. And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?

26. How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

27. And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

28. Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

The disciples became hungry by their walk, and began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn (grain), which grew beside the path. Luke adds, rubbing them in their hands, to separate the kernel from the chaff. "Permission to pluck and eat ears of standing corn was given by the Law, provided that no instrument was used (Deut. 23 : 25)." Christ himself was not plucking the grain, probably to avoid any controversy with the Pharisees. But he defended his disciples when the Pharisees asked **Why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?**

The disciples did not break the fourth commandment, but only the Pharisaic interpretations of it. They regarded plucking the grain with the hands as a kind of reaping, and rubbing off the husk as a kind of threshing.

Illustrations of Pharisaic Sabbath Laws. FIRST. "By ingenious constructions and by stretch of words the Jews had turned the Sabbath into a day of bondage, and made it a monument of superstitions. No Jew might kindle a fire on that day, not even light a candle. There were thirty-nine principal occupations which, with all that was analogous to them, were forbidden. Men must not fling more corn to their poultry than will serve that day, lest it may grow by lying still, and they be said to sow their corn upon the Sabbath. They may not carry a flap or fan to drive away the flies."

SECOND. Mk. 3 : 1-6. Again Jesus went into the synagogue, and **there was a man there** whose right hand (Luke) was **withered**. The Pharisees were watching Jesus. Jesus, indignant and grieved for the hardness of their hearts, restored the man with a word.

Read the full account.

THIRD. Jesus restored a man with an unclean spirit on the Sabbath in the synagogue at Capernaum. Mk. 1 : 21-27 ; Luke 4 : 33-37.

FOURTH. He healed Peter's wife's mother on the Sabbath at her home in Capernaum. Mk. 1 : 29-32 ; Luke 4 : 38, 39 ; Matt. 8 : 14, 15.

FIFTH. Healing of the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda. John 5 : 5-18.

SIXTH. Opening the eyes of one born blind ; making clay on the Sabbath for the blind man's eyes. John 9 : 1-16.

SEVENTH. Healing of the

woman who had a spirit of infirmity. Luke 13 : 10-12.

EIGHTH. Curing a man who had the dropsy. Luke 14 : 1-6.

Thus Seven Miracles were wrought by Jesus on the Sabbath.



The Man with the Withered Hand.

Bida.

AND he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

3. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

4. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

NINTH. Preaching in the synagogues at Nazareth, Capernaum, and elsewhere on the Sabbath. Mk. 1:1-6; Luke 4:16, etc.

TENTH. Jesus preached and taught in the Temple. John 7:14, 22, 23. Defending himself from the charge of breaking the Sabbath.

ELEVENTH. Jesus dined with a Pharisee on the Sabbath. Luke 14:1.

11. WHAT JESUS TAUGHT CONCERNING THE SABBATH.

1. "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." (Mark 2:27.)

2. "And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life or to kill?" (Mk. 3:4; Luke 6:9.)

3. "And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" (Matt. 12:10.)

4. "And answered them saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?" (Luke 14:5; Matt. 12:11.)

5. "How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days." (Matt. 12:12.)

6. "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." (Mk. 2:28; Luke 6:5.)

7. Jesus, in defending his hungry disciples from the Pharisees' charge of breaking the sabbath by plucking grain by the wayside, "said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?" (Matt. 12:3-5; Mk. 2:25, 26.)

8. New methods for new times (Mark 2:21, 22) illustrated by Jesus himself. No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

It is for us to discover just what changes in forms and methods are required under modern conditions. No one can impose his own views on others, and he must be convinced with certainty that he is not destroying divine principles and not merely methods.

III. IN VIEW OF JESUS' PREACHINGS AND PRACTICE, WHAT ARE THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE SABBATH QUESTION FOR HIS DISCIPLES UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS?

Note. It would be well for the scholars to study the above story of the practice and teachings of Jesus as to the sabbath, and from it make a list for themselves of what they should do on Sundays.

"The portraits of the Pharisees, the Herodians and the Sadducees . . . serve to show the personality of our Saviour in a most remarkable light. Their disputes with Him elicit bright and burning truths, which are as valid and vital today as they were then . . . truths that burn like stars of the first magnitude in the dark vault of that distant time, and illumine this age no less than that." — *Cartoons of St. Mark*.

1. *The Sabbath made for Man and not Man for the Sabbath* is the foundation principle of the fourth Commandment. The sabbath from the beginning was made for

man, for his whole nature, for body and soul, for physical rest, for mental and social improvement, for his spiritual and moral growth, and for his eternal salvation. The Sabbath law is the divine barrier and safeguard against the inroads of wealth, power, greed and pleasure, upon the rights of man, especially of those who work for others. It is a terrible fate to be compelled to work seven days each week with no chance for better things, for home, for rest, for culture, for religion. There can be no permanent slavery or oppression or degradation where the Sabbath rights are reserved to all men and women who are employed by others. A holy Sabbath day is the Magna Charta of liberty, the jubilee of freedom. One of the most hopeful signs of the times is that both in this country and in Europe the working men have been waking up to their rights and privileges on the Sabbath.

One of the fundamental rules of Sabbath observance is not to use the Sabbath in such a way as to deprive others of its blessings. Sunday laws are the best friends of the laborers. In Deuteronomy these words are added to the fourth Commandment, — "*that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou*" (Deut. 5:14). One of the first essentials of true humanity and brotherhood and true Sabbath-keeping is to give others, as well as ourselves, the benefit of the Sabbath.

There are exceptions, such as those referred to by Christ, when the higher good of man requires some to work on the Sabbath; but in all cases there should be some way to make up to them their Sabbath loss. And the necessities must be real.

The Sabbath rightly used is the greatest institution for learning and health and prosperity and culture and soul-growth the world has ever known. Hence, the neglect of the Sabbath by an individual or a nation is the surest road to deterioration, and misses the greatest blessings God has conferred upon man.

Think what a change in all Christendom the total abrogation of the Sabbath would make!

2. Jesus did not abolish nor abrogate the ancient fourth Commandment as some good men claim. What Jesus abolished was the misinterpretations and misuse of the Sabbath law.

Illustration. The Sabbath law, under the treatment of the Scribes, had become like the Marine Glaucus described by Plato. He had been so long in the sea, that it was difficult to see his ancient nature, because the members of his body were partly broken off, and others were worn away by the action of the waves. And, besides, other things had grown to him, such as shell-fish, sea-weed, and stones, so that he in every respect resembled a beast rather than what he was. — *Republic, book 10, chap. 11.*

What Jesus taught was the true interpretation of the Sabbath law. He rescued it from the false interpretations put upon it; from being a mere form to being a spirit and a life. Jesus swept away the cobwebs, he did not tear down the house. He only removed the rubbish with which the Pharisees had encumbered it; and he left it a day of freedom, of joy, of peace. It would be passing strange that he who asserted that he was Lord of the Sabbath should abolish the Sabbath of which he is Lord. God has written the Fourth Commandment in the nature of man as well as in his Word. He ordained it for man. It is the very height of absurdity to suppose that he would abolish a law absolutely necessary to the best welfare of man.

What has been spoken of as "the Old Testament Sabbath now abolished" arose from a few incidents which took place under peculiar circumstances, as in Numbers 15:32-36, where a man was stoned to death for gathering a few sticks on the Sabbath, in direct and open defiance of Jehovah, which under the circumstances was high treason, and such instances as are related in Nehemiah 13:15-22 and Ezekiel 20:12, 13, where the small number of Jews in a world full of idolatry broke openly God's Sabbath law.

The real Old Testament Sabbath is described not only in Ex. 20, but in Isaiah 58:13, 14. "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

3. *The Sunday-Sabbath.* Sunday is just as really the seventh day and the *Sabbath* day as is the Saturday-Sabbath of the Jews. All the difference lies in beginning the count from a different point. And no one can go back far enough into the past to know from what point the Saturday-Sabbath began. We know from what point the Sunday-Sabbath began, — the resurrection of Jesus.

Bush well says, "All that the commandment expressly requires is to observe a day of sacred rest after every six days of labor. The seventh day, indeed, is to be kept holy, but not a word here is said as to the point from which the reckoning is to begin. The 'seventh day' is not so much the seventh according to any particular method of computing the septenary cycle, as in reference to the six working-days before mentioned; every seventh day in rotation after six of labor."

Of course for convenience there must be a general agreement.

4. *Sunday as a Day of Rest.* "As a psychologist I believe in the Sabbath day. The command to keep it as a day of rest is written in our physiological constitutions. In no land should the Sabbath be so hallowed as in this land of hustle, tension and Americanitis." — *President G. Stanley Hall of Clark University.*

But rest is not idleness; rest is a change in work; in brain activity, in thoughts, in the activity of the soul, in the religious social life. A Sunday of all-day recreation is seldom much of a rest. Jesus laid down no law on this point, but left it to the conscience of each individual.

5. One of the great blessings of the Sabbath is the opportunity to follow Jesus in doing good to others. It gives the finest and largest opportunity for putting into practice the religious lessons he has learned, — to go about doing good, to help the sick, the needy, to comfort the afflicted, to lift up the fallen, to teach the young, visit the fatherless and the widow, helping the poor, winning souls to Christ and his church.

"It is right to visit the sick on the Lord's day, when they need our sympathy and when we can carry to them blessing or cheer. It is right to visit those who are in affliction when we can carry comfort to them; to visit the poor when we can relieve their distress. Especially is it right to go out among the unsaved, when we can do anything to bring them to Christ." — *J. R. Miller, D.D.*

See Matthew 25:34-46.

6. The Sabbath should not only be kept holy, sacred, from the inroads of daily labor and its hordes of cares, but should be kept sacred to the higher nature of man. The higher nature, the soul-life, is vastly more important than the physical life, and this rest from labor gives the needed opportunity.

Keeping the Sabbath holy gives more real rest than holiday and worldly amusement or idleness can possibly give.

Keep Your Soul on Top. "A little girl gave her father the most important condition of physical well-being when, in answer to his question, 'What was the minister's text,' she replied, 'Keep your soul on top.' Challenged to find the text, she discovered that it read, 'I keep my body in subjection.' But she had got the right interpretation of it. He who keeps his soul on top, but makes his body a strong and vigorous instrument of his soul, will observe the two conditions of physical well-being, and will have what is the essence of true manhood, a sound soul in a sound body." — *Laicus.*

The Religious Sabbath may be made to do for the adult what the school does for the child. The study of the Bible, the highest literature in existence; thinking on the various subjects it teaches the highest themes; and applying them to daily life and to the questions of the day, become a liberal education. They will educate a man more than his whole college course, though that course will greatly enhance its value. The study of the highest themes, the discussion of them in the Sabbath school, the instruction from the pulpit, the expression of religious truth in the prayer meeting, give an ordinary person more mental training in the course of his life than all his school days give. A boy will average 10 years of school 8 months in the year, or 1750 days. A man of 70 has, since his tenth year, had 3135 Sabbath days, almost twice as many days as he had schooling.

The Religious Sabbath gives to every one the much needed opportunity to see himself in the light of God's presence. Is he doing right in his business? Are his ideals of what is right as high as they ought to be? Is he doing his whole duty to the cause of Christ? It is good once in a while "to sit alone with one's conscience."

"That was a wise statement of the great Emerson when he said: 'There is no art like the art of putting first things first.'"

The Religious Sabbath can be and ought to be the most attractive and delightful day of the week.

7. Every one who is a Christian, a true disciple of Jesus, should join some church of Christ, both for his own sake and for the greater usefulness of the church as one division of Christ's army warring against evil. And this even though he may not agree with all its plans and teachings.

At least thirty-eight times in the brief story of the Gospels it is stated that Jesus went into a synagogue or Temple. For example, Matt. 4:23; 13:54; 21:12; Mark 1:21 and 29; 3:1; 11:11; Luke 2:46; 4:16; 13:10; John 7:14; 18:20. And He did this even though all the teaching was not correct, and some of the leaders were bad men.

Every person's power is greatly increased by becoming a part of an organization. Twice two in spiritual arithmetic are more than two plus two. According to the promise, if "one can chase a thousand, two can put, not two thousand, but ten thousand to flight." Twice two are ten. Two sounds added to two others are four sounds; multiplied, they are an anthem. The hope of the world's progress, of the millennium lies in this: that the result of spiritual arithmetic is not by addition, but by multiplication. It is not ten and one, but ten times one that brings power.

The church is living in the midst of many evils and is wrestling against spiritual wickedness in high places, against principalities and powers of evil, against wrongs that should

"Stir a fever in the blood of age
And make the infant sinew strong as steel."

The individual church needs to include all Christians, and the churches of the whole nation should be federated against every evil in the land, if they would succeed in overcoming them; and this while they continue their separate organizations and forms, under the one Leader, Jesus Christ.

The Sabbath is the great social opportunity of the Church, for acquaintance, for spiritual uplift, for communion of saints, for welcoming strangers. It is the opportunity to win others to Christ.

8. *Children in the Home and Sunday School on the Sabbath.* The two greatest handmaids of the Christian Church are Christian homes and a good Sunday School. They both deal with the children, whom Jesus loved so well; and both are seeking to train the children to be loyal followers of Jesus.

The true Christian home is university, training school, and Sunday School, all in one. There is something in it, if rightly used, to train every faculty of the mind.

The daily home duties are one of the very best schools for building up a noble character. There is something in the home to train each virtue and each grace. It is a training school of love and joyous self-denial. The family atmosphere of religious life, of benevolence, of temperance, of kindness, of intelligence, of bright conversation, is an education.

"What you want your boy or girl to be, that you must be yourself," declared Bishop Lawrence, in an address in St. Paul's Cathedral at the 11th annual convention of the Sunday School Union of the Episcopal diocese of Massachusetts. "Everybody believes that our nation should be a religious nation, but if it is to be a religious nation, there must be a religious people, and this there cannot be without personal religion."

"Stephen Girard, the infidel millionaire of Philadelphia, one Saturday bade his clerks come the following day and unload a vessel which had just arrived. One of the clerks who had strong convictions and the power to act upon them, refused to comply with the demand. 'Well, sir,' said Mr. Girard, 'if you cannot do as I wish we can separate.' 'I know that, sir,' said the hero; 'I also know that I have a widowed mother to care for, but I cannot work on Sunday.' 'Very well, sir,' said the proprietor, 'go to the cashier's desk, and he will settle with you.' For three weeks the young man tramped the streets of Philadelphia, looking for work. One day a bank president asked Mr. Girard to name a suitable person for cashier for a new bank about to be started. After reflection, Mr. Girard named this young man. 'But I thought you discharged him.' 'I did,' was the answer, 'because he would not work on Sunday; and the man who will give up a lucrative position rather than break the Sabbath, can be trusted under all circumstances.'"

Gulliver's New Method of House-Building. "To forget in our desire for practical righteousness the underlying principles upon which this particularly important aspect of the Christian religion must rest. We must be concerned about character-building, but we must not be guilty of the architectural folly of the professor of the Academy of Lagado. This professor, you know, according to Mr. Gulliver, contrived a new method of house building by which he began at the roof and built down to the foundation." — W. E. Biedervolf, D.D.

First of all the true home must be deeply religious. A religious atmosphere must pervade it like the sun in spring which awakens the flowers; and especially on Sun-

day, — bringing the children to church, family prayers, teaching them the Sunday school lessons, training them to give to those in need, and to missions which connect them with all the world.

The Sunday School is the close ally of the home and the church.

Its ideal is, —

“ALL THE CHURCH IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ;

“ALL THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE CHURCH ;

“AND EVERYBODY IN BOTH.”

“Gladstone, England's greatest premier and statesman, once made the statement that the relationship of the church to the youth of Great Britain was a matter of greater importance than of all the combined problems of the British Empire.”

For every quality that describes the ideal church, the Sabbath school is a training, — worship, Bible study, giving that puts the scholar in touch with the whole world, obedience, order, decision days, practice in what is taught, organized work for helping others, music and hymns.

“One earnest Sabbath-school teacher was accustomed to take two boys with him every Sabbath afternoon to visit some sick or unfortunate person. The boys eagerly awaited their turn for the trip. Always there was a little gift carried. They always walked ; and as they walked this wise teacher instilled into the hearts of these boys the truest purity of the Christ-like soul. Another teacher with a class of girls took one of her pupils each Sabbath afternoon to the mission school where she taught.” — *Lydia E. Imbrie*.

It is a great blessing to any one who teaches a class. It does not require great learning, but character, faithfulness, Bible study, love for the young. Dr. Gulick once interviewed fifty business men in New York City as to what has done the most for them in their Sunday school experience. And in every case it was not the kind of lesson, nor whether the teacher was man or woman, but it was the personality of the teacher.

Dr. Payson of Portland once said that if ministers realized the blessing and the opportunity God had conferred upon them, they would leap and shout for joy, crying, “I am a minister of Christ ; I am a minister of Christ.”

If Sunday school teachers realized their privilege, the blessedness of teaching, of guiding children into the ways of life, they would exult, and glory, and give thanks, for “*I, too, am a teacher of children ; I have a class in the Sunday school.*”

LESSON VI. — February 10.

JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE. — Mark 3:7-35.

PRINT Mark 3:7-19 a.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.* — MARK 3:14.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 10:1-4 ; Luke 6:12-16 ; John 15:15-27.

Primary Topic : Jesus Chooses Twelve Helpers.

Intermediate Topic : The Twelve and What We Know About Them.

Senior and Adult Topic : What It Means to Be a Disciple of Jesus.

Additional Material : Matt. 5:13-16 ; 16:24, 25 ; John 17:6-26 ; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Lesson for to-day centers around the appointment by Jesus of 12 disciples to be with him continually.

The Lesson is really a picture gallery,

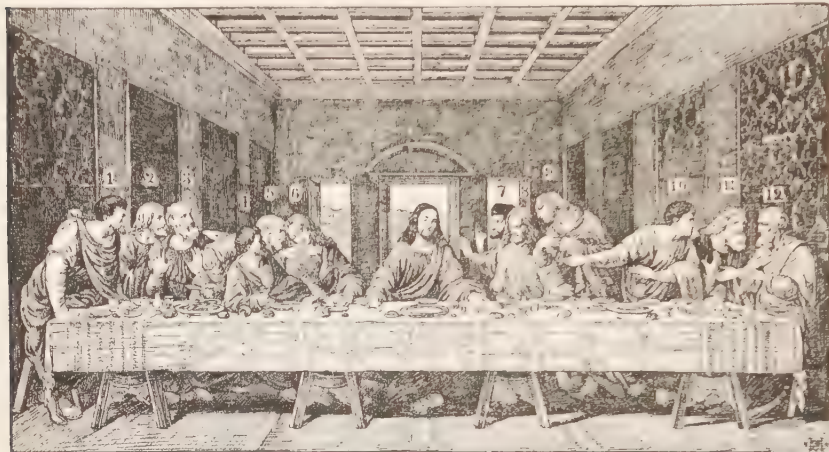
in which we are to see the portraits of the apostles in the process of being painted, growing more and more perfect under the Master's hand. It is full of interest and instruction for our daily lives.

LEARN BY HEART.

The names of the Twelve, with some special characteristic of each one, that distinguishes him from the others.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Bruce's *Training of the Twelve. The Apostles as Everyday Men*, by Pres. Robert Ellis Thompson, S.T.D. (S. S.



The Last Supper
in the Santa Maria Della Grazie.

Leonardo da Vinci.

1. Bartholomew.
2. James the Younger.
3. Andrew.

4. Judas.
5. Peter.
6. John.

7. Thomas.
8. James the Elder.
9. Philip.

10. Matthew.
11. Thaddeus.
12. Simon.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Midsummer, A.D. 28, at the same time as the Sermon on the Mount. It was near the middle of the ministry of Jesus.

Place. — The Horns of Hattin, a two-crested mountain not far west of the Sea of Galilee.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The names of the twelve.
The characteristics of each.
Why Jesus chose each of these.
The ways in which Jesus trained them.
How they aided Jesus in his work.
For what great work was he training them?
Their gradual progress from fishermen to Apostles that changed the history of the world.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Call and Training of the Twelve Apostles.

- I. THE CONDITIONS THAT LED TO THE PERMANENT SELECTION OF THE TWELVE.
- II. THE PORTRAIT GALLERY OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

Times Co.). *The College of the Apostles*, by James R. Vance, D.D. (Revell). All the *Bible Dictionaries. The Making of Simon Peter*, by A. J. Southhouse (Meth. Book Concern). *Peter in the Firelight*, by Rev. Wm. Allen Knight (Pilgrim Press). *The Life of the Apostle Peter*, by Principal Salmond, D.D., Aberdeen (T. & T. Clark). *Peter the Apostle*, by Wm. M. Taylor, D.D. (Harpers). And *Judas Iscariot*, the first sermon of a vol. of sermons with that title, by J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D. (Doran).

THE LESSON IN ART.

Very many of the pictures of scenes in the life of Jesus have in them figures of the apostles; sometimes possible to be identified as one or another, according to the artist's conception. But the most cannot be so identified. There are also pictures of the Last Supper, notable that by Leonardo da Vinci, where all are represented. In addition there are innumerable pictures of the separate apostles, among which we may name, *Peter and John*, by Burnand* and Dürer.* *Peter*, by Bartolommeo,* *John*, by Dolci* and Domenichino.*

7. But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa.

8. And from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9. And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10. For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

I. THE CONDITIONS THAT LED TO THE PERMANENT SELECTION OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES. The first six verses selected for this lesson (vs. 7-12), and verse 20, describe to us something of the overwhelming burden of work that was pressing upon Jesus, "in consequence of his very success in gaining disciples." The multitude at times was so great, and the calls for healing so many, that he and his disciples could not so much as eat bread. They came from Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem, from beyond Jordan, from Tyre and Sidon, and Idumea (east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea). **For he had healed many, insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues, v. 10.**

We have come now to "an important landmark in the Gospel history. It divided the ministry of our Lord into two nearly equal portions." — *Professor Bruce*. In this second division circumstances made it necessary that there should be some changes in his methods.

1. He must have a band of permanent helpers to be with him, and multiply his work of preaching and healing. They would be his constant and close companions, at all times and in all places, and hence must give up their former occupations.

2. "The twelve were to be Christ's witnesses in the world after he himself had left it; it was to be their peculiar duty to give to the world a faithful account of their Master's words and deeds, a just image of his character, a true reflection of his spirit. This service obviously could be rendered only by persons who had been, as nearly as possible, eye-witnesses and servants of the incarnate Word." — *Bruce's Training of the Twelve*. The Witness of the Apostles, whether oral or written, was the ultimate source of our four Gospels.

3. In order to accomplish this purpose it was necessary that the chosen twelve, whatever imperfections they might have at first, should receive such a training under Jesus as would develop all the latent possibilities of their nature so that at last they would "possess very extraordinary qualifications. The mirrors must be finely polished that are designed to reflect the image of Christ. . . . From the time of their being chosen, the twelve entered on a regular apprenticeship for the great office of apostleship, in the course of which they were to learn in the privacy of an intimate daily fellowship with their Master, what they should be, do, believe and teach, as his witnesses and ambassadors to the world. He was to make it his business to tell them in darkness what they should afterwards speak in the light; and to whisper in their ears what in after years they should preach upon the housetops." — *The Training of the Twelve*, by *Professor Bruce*.

II. A PORTRAIT GALLERY OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES. The evening before Jesus selected his twelve helpers, he went up alone to a secluded place on the top of Mt. Hattin, and spent the night in prayer. This shows how important was the crisis in his work.

The next morning he called his disciples to him, and from the number he chose twelve to be continually with him during the remainder of his mission, and after his death to be the twelve foundation stones of the new kingdom of God.

They were "arranged in three groups of four, in each of which the same names were always found, though the order of arrangement varies. The first group included those best known, the second, the next best, and the third the least known. Peter stands at the head of all the lists, and Judas Iscariot at the foot."

- 13. And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him.
- 14. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,
- 15. And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:
- 16. And Simon he surnamed Peter;
- 17. And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:
- 18. And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite,
- 19. And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him:

FIRST GROUP.

Simon Peter	The Man of Rock.
Andrew	Peter's Brother.
James }	{ Sons of Zebedee, and Sons of Thunder.
John }	

SECOND GROUP.

Philip	The earnest Inquirer.
Bartholomew or Nathanael	The guileless Israelite.
Thomas	The Melancholy.
Matthew	The Publican (so called only by himself).

THIRD GROUP.

James, son of Alphæus	James the Less?
Lebbæus, Thaddæus, Judas of James	The Three-named Apostle.
Simon	The Zealot.
Judas Iscariot	The Traitor.
(Arranged as in Matthew). — From <i>Bruce's Training of the Twelve</i> .	

The Twelve men chosen were twelve great types.
They were sent out two by two (Mk. 6 : 7), "for thus they were more complete and well-balanced. Each would supplement the work of the other. They would reach different classes of minds, and where one failed the other would be ready with the right word." Their characteristics were such that each was the complement of the other.

PORTRAITS OF PETER AND ANDREW. Two brothers, the sons of Jonas (Matt. 6 : 17) — John (John 1 : 42, Am. R.), a well-to-do fisherman in the Sea of Galilee.

PORTRAIT OF SIMON PETER. Simon was his Hebrew name and his only one till he met Jesus.

His birthplace was Bethsaida (John 1 : 44) — "House of Fishing" or "Fish-town," at the head of the Sea of Galilee near where the Jordan flows into it.

Age. He has generally been regarded as the oldest of the apostles (except perhaps James the brother of John) and is so treated in the pictures of him by artists. He was probably not far from 40 years old when called to be an apostle, somewhat older than Jesus.

His home was originally at Bethsaida, but at the time he met Jesus he was living at Capernaum where he and his brother Andrew owned a house which seems to have been of some size, and to have been the center of the labors of our Lord while in Capernaum.

Marriage. The fact that his wife's mother was once sick of a fever and was cured by Jesus proves that he was married. In later years, according to 1 Cor. 9 : 5, his wife accompanied him in some of his travels as a missionary.

Business. He was a fisherman, and owned a boat on the lake. Since his father is not mentioned at Capernaum, it is probable that he was not living at this time. Simon with his brother doubtless "obtained by his business an income adequate to all the wants of the household."

Education. Simon had the common education of the synagogue schools. All Jewish children learned to read the Hebrew Scriptures. He could speak the conversational Greek of commerce, and the Aramaic (a branch of the Syriac), the common language of Palestine.

Simon becomes a Disciple of John the Baptist. He had heard John preach, received the baptism of repentance, renouncing his sins; and was ready to accept the promised Messiah.

Simon becomes a Disciple of Jesus (John 1:40-42). John had pointed out Jesus to his own disciples, and Andrew had gone in search of the new-found Messiah. He found Him, and spent the rest of the day with Him. Then he hastened to find Simon to tell him the good news. He brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked upon him, as if he would see into his inmost soul, and said, *Thou art Simon son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas* — Peter, a Rock (Am. R.). *Cephas* is Rock, in the common Palestine language. *Peter* (*Petros*) is Rock in Greek, in which language all the Gospels were written.

The Transformation of Simon into Peter. It is at this point that occurred one of the two most helpful, comforting, beautifully encouraging experiences in Peter's life, — good for disciples through the ages.

Simon had many imperfections which if not removed would greatly hinder his usefulness as an apostle. He has been misrepresented as if he were guilty of crimes, but that is not true.

He was a genuine, true man, whole souled, of boundless energy, a natural leader, overflowing with enthusiasm and zeal, thoroughly loyal to his Master, whom he loved.

But he had the faults of his virtues, — rash, overzealous, self-confident, impulsive, hot tempered, uncertain. "He flamed with contradictions."

When Jesus looked at Simon he made no reference to any faults or imperfections, he found no fault with him at all. He simply said "Thou art Simon" now, but thou shalt become Peter, the Rock. Every element in you shall be strong for good, — will, wisdom, self-control, victory over temptation, character, strength to endure. Thus Jesus set before Peter the goal, the ideal, the vision of what he might become, a prophecy and hope which God "would make divinely real."

"The common thing, the common clay
He touched and tintured, and straightway
It grew to glory manifest."

This change came by Peter's living in the School of Christ, under the influences and training described in Lesson 11. Blessed are those whom Christ's school so gently and lovingly transforms.

The other experience, wonderfully expressive of Jesus' method of treating the disciples' faults, took place on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, two or three weeks after His resurrection. Peter and six others of the apostles went fishing, but caught nothing all night long. At daybreak Jesus stood upon the shore, and made Himself known by telling them to cast their nets on the right side of the boat, when they gathered a great multitude of large fishes; another hint and prophecy that they should be successful fishers of men. Peter plunged into the water in his earnestness to meet Jesus (John 21:1-14).

Now let us recall that fearful scene during the trial of Jesus, not many days before, when, on that awful night of terror, Peter thrice denied his Lord with cursing and swearing "I know not the man." The cock crew. Jesus looked at Peter, into his very soul. The shock of his fall opened Peter's eyes; aghast with horror at his deed, he went out and wept bitterly.

Returning to the seaside, by the fire we listen to Jesus and Simon.

Jesus. (Without a word of faultfinding.) "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"

Peter. "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." (He does not say "more than these.")

Jesus. "Feed my lambs." (To show that Jesus recognizes him as restored to his apostleship, and the proof was to be by feeding the lambs.)

Jesus. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?"

Peter. "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

Jesus. "Feed my sheep."

Jesus. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?"

Peter. (Grieved because this was the third time, reminding him of his three denials.) "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

Jesus. "Feed my sheep." In this gentle loving way Jesus showed Peter that he was forgiven and restored.

Simon became Peter the Rock. The three years in the school of Jesus, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit completed the transformation.

Blessed, blessed, are those who can say :

Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

"Peter remains even today the most fascinating of that band of men which surrounded our Lord in the days of his earthly pilgrimage." — *J. Campbell Morgan*. He abounded in adventures. "His life is one of the most romantic in the world's history. He visits very often in a little house called 'Myself' which stands hard by the dusty highway of life. Without his enthusiasm, his candor, his blunders and new starts, the gospel stories would have been poorer." — *The Cross Builders*.

PORTRAIT OF ANDREW, PETER'S BROTHER. "Matthew groups the Twelve in pairs (10 : 2-4) which we have good reason to regard as the actual arrangement, and when he sent them out, he sent them not singly, but by two and two (Mk. 6 : 7). On what principle were they paired? Should we not expect that this would so be done that each Apostle would find in his comrade the man who most differed from himself, and therefore could best supply his defects, making out of two half-men one whole one?" — *Dr. R. E. Thomson*.

Andrew was chosen by Jesus to be the partner of Peter his brother, doubtless because he had the qualities which were the complement of those of Peter.

Andrew was a fisherman and partner of his brother, and with his brother had a house in Capernaum (Mk. 1 : 29). He was a convert of John the Baptist who pointed him to Jesus as the Lamb of God. He had a long interview with Jesus, and then sought his brother Peter and brought him to Jesus. "The highest work a man ever does in this world, is done when he goes himself first to Jesus, and then leads another man to him." — *C. S. Robinson, D.D.* The modern "Brotherhood of St. Andrew" is founded on this fact.

The Character of Andrew was in many ways a contrast and counterpart to that of Peter. He was loving and loyal and true, but showed it in a different way. He was a man of business wisdom, cautious, careful, faithful, "the substantial man of foresight, who has a sense of difficulties, and tries to provide against them." He was more a Conservative than a Radical. When Jesus fed the 5000 he was on the Committee of Ways and Means. Later when some Greeks asked Philip how they could see Jesus, Philip appeals to Andrew "as a man who will imperil nothing by a mistake."

Hence Jesus joins these two brothers together when he sends them forth two by two. "They were not merely mated but matched. Each magnified the other's virtues, minimized the other's faults. This is the key to the inner life and character of these men. When Peter would be despondent, Andrew would say Cheer up." — *Vance*. Both lived with the same Jesus, studied in His school, were trained by His example.

THE PORTRAITS OF JAMES AND JOHN. The contrast between these two brothers lay chiefly in the difference in their ages. — Age and Youth. James senior, and John junior. James is sometimes regarded as the oldest of the Apostles and John as the youngest. Hence James is named first. He survived the Lord but ten years, suffering martyrdom in A.D. 44, while John survived Christ's death at least 70 years.

These men were sons of Zebedee and Salome, probably the sister of the mother of Jesus, and hence cousins of Jesus. Apparently they were comfortably off in this world's goods, for while in partnership with their father, theirs was probably a more profitable business than Peter's, in a larger boat which contained their father and servants as well as the two brothers. And John had a house to which Mary the mother of Jesus went as his guest after the crucifixion.

For legends of St. John and the robber see Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*.

Except for age the two brothers were alike. "Both were called by Christ **Boanerges**, or 'sons of thunder,' because 'they were both quiet, reserved men, with very intense feeling; and when they did speak their silence was sometimes broken so suddenly, and their indignation and ardor burst forth so vehemently, that a flash of lightning from a thundercloud was suggested to the onlookers.'" — *R. C. Gillie*. For example, when the two would have fire fall from heaven on the Samaritan village that would not receive Christ (Luke 9 : 54). It was not vengeance, but the ardor

of love, that made them indignant. Both were equally ambitious when they asked their mother to intercede with Jesus to give them places of honor beside him in his future kingdom ; but there was love and zeal mingled with their selfish interests, for they declared themselves ready to face death for him (Matt. 20 : 20-24).

"In the school of Jesus the natural defects of their character were overcome, and their very vehemence, chastened by grace, became an element of strength and glory." — *Davis' Bible Dictionary*.

John is often pictured as effeminate, and has been called "gentle St. John," as if lacking in force. But this is erroneous. But as Simon became Peter, the Rock, so John became the ideal of supreme Love. "Only strong natures are capable of earnest love. Love prompts to energy and noble deeds. An apostle of love is ever a son of thunder." — *David J. Burrell, D.D.*

Youth and age walked together, and each one aided the other in the service of God and man. "Age has much to teach youth, and youth has much to teach age." Age and youth in the church and in the home make one complete whole.

"And as of old by two and two,
His herald saints the Saviour sent
To soften hearts like morning dew,
Where he to shine in mercy meant.

"He loves when age and youth are met,
Fervent old age and youth serene,
Their high and low in concord set
For sacred song, Joy's golden mean."

PORTRAITS OF PHILIP AND BARTHOLOMEW. The disciple Bartholomew is so called in the first three Gospels, but Nathanael by John. The full name was probably Nathanael Bartholomew, that is Nathanael Bar(son of)-Tolmai.

Philip came from Bethsaida. His business is unknown. He was not a dullard as some have called him, but apparently a commonplace man, perhaps a man of one or two talents rather slow in the movement of his mind. Professor Bruce says : "The conclusion has been drawn that he was characteristically deliberate, slow in arriving at a decision, . . . but all that we read of him suggests the idea of the earnest inquirer after truth, who had thoroughly searched the Scriptures, and made himself acquainted with the Messiah of promise and prophecy."

Dr. Vance writes : "Philip was not a genius. But God could make an Apostle out of him, and use him to do a great and glorious work. Philip brings Bartholomew to Jesus. . . . The one-talent Christian does the largest part of church work. It is the faithful private that makes the great general. Philip had not the sagacity to plan and execute a great campaign, but he could and did obey the orders that passed down the line."

"This man ought to interest us, for he presents the type to which we almost all belong, . . . the man who is neither very rich nor very poor, not notable because of excess or of defect, the man with gifts like a million others, the average man. Therefore this quiet, commonplace, unnoticed man, going his faithful way, doing his duty insignificantly and thoroughly, winning so unobtrusively at last his Master's praise, ought to be interesting to us all." — *Bp. Phillips Brooks*.

The man in whom men recognize simply an average human nature like their own, who they know has all their passions and infirmities and no more than their strength to meet them with.

"He is the man who being faithful, pure, serene, brave, hopeful, has power to make his brethren all that he is, of a kind which no brilliant leader of his race can show." — *Bp. Phillips Brooks*.

"It is in the quality rather than in the quantity of talents that their true value lies."

"Behold how great are these primary, eternal qualities — patience, hope, kindness, intelligence, trust, self-sacrifice."

For what Philip did and said see John 1 : 43-46 ; 6 : 5, 7 ; 12 : 20, 22 ; 14 : 8-12.

"Nathanael Bartholomew was a man of a different sort from his friend. He was of quick wit, alert intellect. When brought to see for himself, and when he discerns in our Lord first a superhuman knowledge, and then a divine insight, he bursts into that great confession which he was the first to make, 'Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the king of Israel' (John 1 : 46-49). His mind acted with lightning rapidity." Only one other slight incident is recorded of him : John 21 : 1-3. Nathanael belonged to Cana of Galilee. He is joined together with Philip during their training by Jesus, schoolmates. As far as we can learn both went as missionaries to Asia Minor.

PORTRAITS OF JAMES AND MATTHEW. Two men of diverse temperaments and antipodal mental habitudes, Thomas the melancholy, the doubter, and Matthew the

converted publican, the business man, both outgrowing their imperfections in the school of Christ.

Thomas the Doubter. Thomas means "twin" as does also his other name, "Didymus." "His temperament is that of a man who finds the best things too good to be true, and who usually imagines that the worst foreseen possibility will be realized. He requires direct personal evidence, and will not hastily accept the testimony even of his friends. Yet he will die with Christ rather than desert His cause" (John 11:16: "Let us also go with him that we may die with him"). So when Jesus spoke of his "departure" in his last talk with his disciples (John 14), it is Thomas who said, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" And after the resurrection of Jesus, Thomas did not go to the first meeting of the disciples when Jesus appeared to them, probably because he did not believe the reports of his resurrection. And when he heard that Jesus had appeared to the other ten, Thomas declared, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." But the next Sunday evening he was convinced by seeing Jesus himself, and exclaimed, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:26-29).

"His doubt did not proceed from *unwillingness* to believe. It was the doubt of a sad man whose sadness was due to this, that the event whereof he doubted was one of which he would most gladly be assured." — *Bruce*. It was no careless, flippant doubt of one who has not examined.

"At last Thomas was saved from doubt. What saved him? Love for Christ. He had anchored his soul to the Nazarene with a mighty and abiding love." — *Vance*.

There is a legend of the Apostle Thomas, who is called "the architect," that in his labors for the Gospel he reached India, where King Gondoforus sent for him to build "a prouder palace than mortals know," and placed untold treasures in his hand, and then went away.

But St. Thomas built only a spiritual palace, of good works laid up in heaven.

"He clad the naked, the hungry fed,
The oil of gladness around him shed.

"He blessed them all with the ample store,
As never a king's wealth blessed before."

The king on his return was fiercely angry and thrust the apostle into a dungeon. The king's brother, who had lately died, returned from Paradise, and thus spoke:

"I have been to Paradise, O my king!
And have heard the heavenly angels sing.

"Its glories, there in that radiant place
Shone forth like a smile from the dear Lord's face.

"And there I saw, by the gates of gold,
A palace finer than tongue has told;

"An angel said it was builded there
By the good St. Thomas, with love and care."

The king released St. Thomas from his dungeon cell.

"And said, 'O builder! he most is wise
Who buildeth ever for Paradise.'"

The great work of the church is to build a spiritual church, the kingdom of God, by giving, by helping men to be good, by all deeds of love, by sending the gospel to all the world.

See Mrs. Jameson or *The Schönberg Cotta Family* for the complete story.

Matthew the Publican. Matthew = the Gift of God. His surname was Levi. His father's name was Alphæus (Mk. 2:14). His home was at Capernaum.

His business was that of a publican or collector of customs, at Capernaum, which is on one of the great caravan-routes from the East to Egypt. Apparently he conducted his business, unpopular as it was, and full of temptations, in an honest and upright manner. His position at the custom house kept him as an honest man less exposed to the strong temptation to dishonesty which assailed the publican tax-collectors. But the business bore a bad reputation, and publicans were "universally feared, hated and despised."

Ruskin is right when, in describing a painting of Matthew by Carpaccio, he says: "Do not think that Christ would have called a bad or corrupt publican — much less that a bad or corrupt publican would have obeyed the call. . . . That which is *lost* he comes to save — yes, but not that which is defiantly going the way he has forbidden. Carpaccio knows well that there are no defalcations from Levi's chest, no oppression in his tax-gathering, . . . but a true 'merchant of Venice, uprightest and gentlest of the merchant race.'" — *St. Mark's Rest*.

Matthew, whatever he may once have been, must often have seen and heard Jesus, have known His character and works; and before his call must have believed on Him and become a "twice-born man."

"Matthew believed in Christ with such depth and conviction that he would burn all bridges behind him, and announce the irrevocable purpose of his life to follow the Nazarene. He was not a doubter, but a man of mighty faith."

He was enabled to reach the large class of publicans and outcasts, and to bring them within the immediate circle of the teaching of Jesus. One of the first things he did after his call was to make a great feast, where Jesus and his disciples were invited to meet his former business associates. His experience gave him an opportunity to reach many who were in the greatest need of the Gospel of Jesus. For this reason he calls himself a publican, but none of the others call him so.

His greatest work was the writing of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, from a business man's point of view; few persons in history, few even of the Twelve, have had an influence so great, a career so widely known, a usefulness so extended, as this silent, retiring business man, "swift to hear and slow to speak," who has left no record of his own life.

Thus Thomas the Doubter, and Matthew the man of conviction and faith, and plain business sense, were sent forth by Jesus hand in hand.

"Do what you can, being what you are;
Shine as a glow worm, if you cannot like a star."

PORTRAIT OF JAMES THE SON OF ALPHÆUS. He was called James the Less, or James Junior, or "James the Little" on account of the shortness of his stature (*Hastings*) to distinguish him from James the brother of John. His mother's name was Mary (Mk. 15:40). "Beyond this nothing certain is told us about him in the New Testament." — *Standard Bible Dictionary*. "It is very possible that he was a brother of Matthew." — *Hastings*.

PORTRAIT OF THADDEUS = Lebbaeus (Matt. 10:3) = Judas or Jude the son of James (Acts 1:13, Am. R.). He is called the three-named apostle. Nothing is certainly known of the later history of this apostle. "The only thing recorded of him is that he asked Jesus at the Lord's Supper, when Jesus was speaking, — 'Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?'"

PORTRAIT OF SIMON THE CANANÆAN; OR THE ZEALOT (in Luke 6:15). "All we know of him we get from his surnames, which class Simon as a prominent member of a well-known sect of Christ's time, called Zealots." "The Zealots, like the Pharisees, expected the new Kingdom to be established by God, or his representative the Messiah." But they expected a political Messiah who would deliver the Jews from the Romans. Galilee was the home of the party. Simon could easily see that such insurrections were failures. He had learned to see in Jesus and His teachings the spiritual nature of the Messiah who could save the Jews. He believed in Jesus as the Messiah, and all his enthusiasm and patriotism were now centered in Jesus and in loyalty to the new Kingdom He was founding.

JUDAS, WHO ALSO BETRAYED HIM. Jesus doubtless chose Judas because there were qualities in him which would make him a useful member of the Twelve. But he yielded to temptation. The worm had begun to eat out the heart of the tree, like the white ants of tropical Africa, and when the storm came it fell suddenly with a crash. He was like the house built on the sands, seemingly safe till the winds blew and the rain beat upon it (Matt. 7:26, 27).

Judas grew worse under the best influences, the best teaching, the perfect example; as dead trees decay most rapidly under the power of the sunshine and rain, which give vigor and growth to living trees.

"We are not worst at once; the course of evil
Begins so slowly, and from such slight source,
An infant's hand might stem the breach with clay;

But let the stream grow wider, and philosophy,
Age and religion too, may strive in vain
To stem the headlong current."

Having learned the lessons his character and fate can teach us we turn his portrait to the wall.

Great Variety of Character. "Jesus chose twelve disciples, that every man in all time, might find himself represented among the apostles. The doubter finds himself in Thomas; the fierce, hot-headed, quick-tempered man finds himself in John, the Son of Thunder; the opinionated, impulsive man in Peter; the hard-headed, practical man, desiring the first place in the kingdom, in James, etc. We are all there. And to all of us can come like fitness, worthy of apostleship." — *Bp. H. W. Warren*. All kinds of men can become Christians; all kinds can serve the Lord in some good way. This great variety in Christians enables Christianity to

meet the vast variety of men in the world. But all were one in heart, in the love of Jesus, in seeking the higher life, in building up the kingdom of heaven.

The Reward is that the Faithful Man Becomes a Multiplied Man. His capacity for using all other talents is increased. It is the increase of himself, of what he is, the growth of his soul. And this growth multiplies every talent, every opportunity in a geometrical ratio. There is scarcely any limit to the increase which faithfulness will add to the spiritual gifts bestowed in common upon all Christians.

LESSON VII. — February 17.

JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES: FOUR KINDS OF GROUND.

— Mark 4 : 1-20.

PRINT Mark 4 : 1-8, 14-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Take heed therefore how ye hear.* — LUKE 8 : 18.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 13 : 1-30; 36-43.

Primary Topic : Jesus Telling a Story about Sowing Seed.

Memory Verse : Be ye doers of the word. — James 1 : 22.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Parables, especially such a parable as is given in this lesson, are peculiarly adapted to interest all grades in the Sunday School.

"Here is a story book
Thy Father hath written for thee, —
Come wander with me, she said,
Into regions yet untrod,
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

— Longfellow.

Nature seems to have been created with a purpose to express in visible and concrete forms the spiritual truths we most need in our daily lives. For my part I seldom realize fully any spiritual truth till I have placed it beside its counterpart in nature.

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God."
— Mrs. Browning.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn of A.D. 28, several weeks after the permanent Call of the Twelve. The beginning of a new method of teaching.

Place. — On the shore of the Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why did Jesus begin at this time to speak in parables?
What is a parable?

This parable and its interpretation.

The sower.

The seed.

The four kinds of ground.

LEARN BY HEART.

Gal. 6 : 6-10.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : How to Make our Lives Fruitful in every Good Word and Work.

THE NEW METHOD IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS, vs. 1, 2, 10, 12.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

THE SOWER, v. 3.

THE SEED, vs. 3, 14.

THE SEED FALLING ON THE TRODDEN PATH, vs. 4, 15.

THE SEED SOWN ON STONY GROUND, vs. 5, 6, 16, 17.

THE SEED SOWN AMONG THORNS, vs. 7, 18, 19.

THE SEED SOWN ON GOOD GROUND, vs. 8, 20.

GOD'S FARM.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Jesus Speaking from a Boat, Hofmann* and Doré.

Sermon on the Lake, Bida.

The Sower, S. Wale,* Robert,* Millet.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Parables by the Lake, *Parables in their Home*, by Prof. William H. Thomson, M.D., LL.D., is a remarkable book by one who, though educated and trained in America, was born and brought

up in Palestine. Miss Slattery in *The Seed, the Soil, and the Sower*, beautifully and effectively applies these to the teaching of children. A book for children, but full of instruction for adults, is *Parables of the Lake*, by J. R. Macduff,

D.D. *The Teaching of Jesus in Parables*, by Geo. H. Hubbard (Pilgrim Press), is one of the very best books on parables. Standard works on the parables, by Trench, Taylor, Bruce, Dods, Richey, Calderwood, Arnot, Guthrie, Cummings.

AND he began again to teach by the sea side : and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea ; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2. And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

THE NEW METHOD IN THE TEACHING METHOD OF JESUS, vs. 1, 2, 10-12. The Scene, v. 1. Great multitudes gathered on the seashore near Capernaum, eager to hear Jesus preach the glad tidings of the Kingdom of Heaven. They crowded around him so closely that he could scarcely be seen except by a few. So he entered one of the fishing boats anchored near the shore; probably one owned by one of his fisherman disciples. Here "he sat at the prow, the highest part of the boat." The people stood on the shores, which are curved and sloping, thus forming a natural amphitheatre, with Jesus in the centre. Macgregor tested the acoustic properties of the spot, and found that from the sea, without raising his voice, he could easily be heard on shore at a distance of three hundred yards. Christ's audience had only to look around them, and they would see in actual operation every detail of the parables the Master was uttering.

Why Jesus now began to teach in Parables, vs. 11, 12. Jesus himself gives the answer.

1. It was to test the disciples themselves in a peculiarly helpful way. They "had reached that period in their education by Jesus, when many questions and difficulties would arise concerning his kingdom." Parables presented the truth about the kingdom of God, but in such a way that those who wished to know the truth could see it more and more clearly, in forms that would gradually unfold under larger experiences. By parables truths are put in "so simple a form that a child may understand them, yet so deep in meaning that Christian thought for nearly two thousand years had pondered over them without exhausting their treasures." — *Archbishop Lang*.

2. The other reason for speaking in parables is given by a quotation from Isaiah 6 : 9, 10. Christ was surrounded by enemies, who refused to accept him as their Messiah. They wanted a different kind of a Messiah, one who would redeem them from the political control of Rome. They were prejudiced against him and ever ready to distort and pervert whatsoever he taught and make it a hindrance to their knowledge of the truth instead of a help.

For instance, if Jesus had plainly told the facts about his kingdom, which have since been realized, its true relation to the Jewish commonwealth and the Roman Empire, no power could have made them understand what he said, or kept them from perverting his meaning, from arraying the whole Jewish commonwealth against him, and making him out a traitor to the Roman emperor. This would put an end to his work.

And yet he did teach the truth in parables, whose meaning was gradually unfolded in due time; but such stories could not be used to his destruction, and they would be good seed planted in their minds which would in due time grow and bear fruit. No one could object to a simple story. Besides, these stories would be remembered, inevitably, by the dullest; they would be pondered over, and sometime, months afterwards, perhaps, their true meaning and purpose would flash upon their minds, and then they would "be converted." For God wanted them to be converted, but they refused. They would not be converted (Am. R. "turn again"). It is not Jesus, but the sinner himself that is opposed to his conversion.

Prof. W. H. Thomson, in his *Parables by the Lake*, shows clearly the contrast between Jesus the teacher of a few Galilean peasants and their expected Messiah "drawn in every detail from Eastern life and manners. The Messiah was to be a king, a mighty warrior, in magnificent array, with an imposing retinue, in spectacular

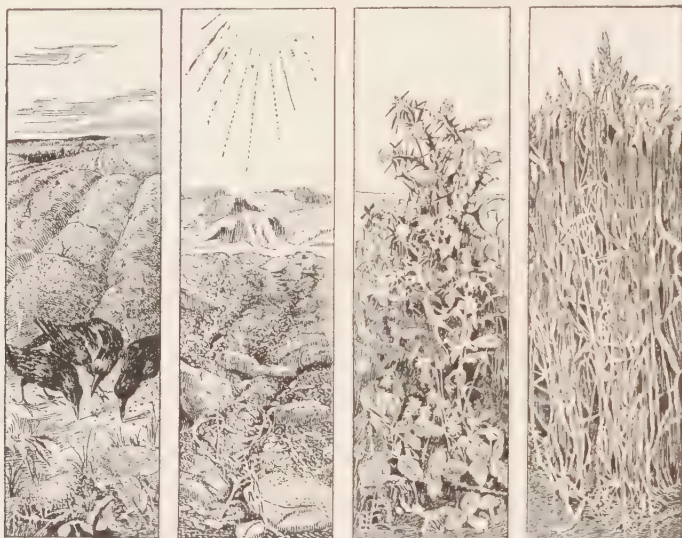
3. Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

grace and splendor suggesting the king's immeasurable elevation above other men. We may be sure that of the thousands at the lake that day, not one, from the Rabbi to the peasant, but hoped to live to hail the Messiah's coming in just such outward fulfilment of the prophetic psalm, 'Gird on thy sword upon thy thigh, O Mighty One! . . . and in thy majesty ride on prosperously' (Ps. 45 : 3, 4)."

Jesus was, and is, in fact, unseen to mortal eyes, a far greater, more glorious, and mightier King and Conqueror than they conceived in the highest flights of their imagination.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER. ALL GOOD SEED, BUT FOUR KINDS OF GROUND IN WHICH IT IS SOWN. "The fourfold division represents but



H. I. Robert. From a photograph.

The Parable of the Sower.

one truth, viz. : Other things being equal the growth and fruitfulness of seeds will be determined by the nature of the soil upon which they are cast."

THE SOWER, v. 3. There went out a sower to sow. The farmers of Palestine, then as now, lived in villages as a protection against robbers, and went forth to the open fields when they would sow. So Jesus went out from heaven to sow his seed in this world. So every sower must go forth to the fields where the good seed is needed. Sower is a general term for any one who sows seed, — Jesus the greatest sower of truth, the Holy Spirit who touches our spirits with the truth, whether through Providence, or men, or nature, every preacher, teacher, reformer, and every disciple is a sower as well as a hearer. He sows by his life, by his words, by his character, by his personal, unconscious influence, by his deeds.

THE SEED. THE SEED WAS GOOD, vs. 3, 14. The Bible itself is good seed for the individual and for the world, when planted in the heart, and when embodied in the lives of believers. There is great variety of seed for all times and seasons, and soil and culture. The Bible is the most popular book, the best seller in the world. In the year's report received at about the time of this writing it is reported that the 30 Bible societies have sold 18 millions of Bibles and parts of Bibles, and private firms have sold 10 millions more, making 28 millions in all. They are issuing now 40,000 a day. Every good example, every right impulse, every act of kindness, every word spoken in season, every truth learned, is a good seed.

Note that God only gives us the *seeds* of the truth, the seeds of his kingdom, the seeds of holy joy and heavenly character, together with all the help we need for their growth and culture. "It is in the seed that the whole mystery of life on earth is enwrapped." — *Prof. W. H. Thomson, LL.D.*

Note the great superabundance of seed which God sows in the natural world, as typical of the good seed he sows in the spiritual world. One grain of corn in a few years could cover the whole earth with growing corn. There are thousands of times as many seeds as can find room to grow. Mr. Darwin found nearly five hundred seeds in a cupful of mud from the bottom of a pond. This is a type of the abundance of good seed in the spiritual world. And this abundance is given to prevent any person from becoming a desert for want of seed sown in his heart.

THE WAYSIDE HEARERS. THE GOOD SEED FALLING ON THE TRODDEN PATH, v. 4. As he sowed some seed fell by the wayside. The sower could scarcely keep many of his seeds from falling by the wayside, for grainfields in Palestine are seldom fenced, and both pedestrians and beasts of burden used freely the narrow paths intersecting them. The ground, of course, is beaten hard, and the seed that falls there remains conspicuously on the surface. "It is of exactly the same soil as the rest, but many passengers have trodden it hard."

And the fowls (Am. R. "birds") of the air came and devoured it (the seed). "Birds in Syria, and especially about the Lake of Tiberias, are extraordinarily numerous. As Syria is the winter feeding ground of many migratory birds from Northern Europe and Asia, this marsh (of the Huleh Lake) is then filled with a greater variety and multitude of waterfowl than I have ever seen elsewhere. . . . Myriads of crows come from all quarters of the heavens. . . . At early dawn they begin their calls again, and then make long lines of flight for the nearest wheat fields. . . . Descending to the plain of Gennesaret, we passed a hillside which was black with over one thousand of them, who were waiting there for the unhappy plowmen to move far enough away for them to descend on their fields." — *W. H. Thomson, M.D.*

The Interpretation, v. 15. Jesus himself interprets this parable as a key to the interpretation of the other parables. The seed is the word . . . that was sown in their hearts. "Properly the seed sown represents the case of such a man" (*Exp. Gk. Test.*); that is a person with the good seed in his heart. "Notice carefully the actual words of Jesus (Matt. 13: 19, Revisions): 'This is *he* that was sown.' Not, this is *it*, but this is *he*. . . ." The seed to which he refers here is the written word so incorporated into the life of a man that he becomes himself a word, a seed of the kingdom.

"Who is he that was sown by the wayside?"

"Any one who heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, to whom that word is but a jingle of empty sounds." — *G. Campbell Morgan.*

A thousand cares, and pleasures, and worldly interests, bad actions, unworthy thoughts, selfishness, have tramped over the heart so that the good seed cannot sink into it. When one is intensely interested in any one thing, other and better things remain unheeded and make little or no impression. "Evil habits, profanity, unclean thoughts have tramped it solid. It needs the gospel plow to rip it up, tears of repentance to make it soft, and the Sun of Righteousness to make it warm." — *Bishop Warren.*

Satan cometh immediately, before the truth is impressed upon the mind, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

"We are not responsible for the thoughts which enter our minds. What we are responsible for is the thoughts we allow to stay there." — *Prof. W. M. Thomson.*

The only thing that can keep our daily work, and cares and burdens from hardening the heart to the religious life, is doing them all from the highest and noblest motives. If we continually hear truth without putting it into practice, it will soon lose its power over us. "No matter how full a reservoir of *maxims* one may possess, and no matter how good one's *sentiments* may be, if one has not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to *act*, one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better." — *Prof. Wm. James on Habit.*

How do you treat your good resolutions? When you have failed in any decision to do better and be a real Christian, to be more helpful at home, more perfect in the Sunday School, more faithful in your lessons, do you begin to practise your new purposes, or is your purpose "like the morning cloud and the early dew"?

5. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6. But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

THE SEED SOWN ON STONY GROUND. THE THIN SOIL OVER A ROCK, vs. 5, 6. **And some fell on stony ground.** Rock covered with a thin, superficial coating of mould. "The rocks of Palestine and Syria are mostly limestones, with many flat stretches covered with an inch or so of soil." — *Prof. Isaac Hall*. Seed on such soil sprang up sooner than the rest, because the dry, underlying rock drew the heat of the sun, and warmed the seed into earlier life. **As soon as it was sprung up it withered away.** The sun soon dried up the hot surface soil, which could draw up no moisture from the deep earth, and the roots had no depth of soil into which to run and drink in the moisture.

Jesus' Interpretation, vs. 16, 17. **These are they**, persons who have received the good seed intended to make them fruitful in every good word and work for the kingdom of heaven; who **when they have heard the word**, immediately receive it with **gladness**. Their emotions are touched, but the word does not reach their moral nature, and their will and character are unchanged. They are moved by the winds of popular excitement or enthusiasm, but there is no new life. Their fault is not the mere fact of receiving the word with joy. For joy is a characteristic of deep as well as shallow natures. "*Absence of joy in a religious life is a sign, not of depth, but of dulness. Joy without thought is a definition of the stony-ground hearer.*" — *A. B. Bruce*.

17. **These have no root in themselves.** The word has not taken hold of their deeper nature. They had new emotions, but not a new heart; they enjoyed the excitement, but did not give themselves, body, soul, and spirit, to God. The truth must also take root in practice, in the life, or it will die out.

"It is a mistake, however, to confound this class with impulsive characters in general. Persons of an impulsive temperament are often so on account of a naturally strong warmth of feeling, and thus they may be among the best and sweetest persons in the world. Their many mishaps, however, often cause them to be underrated, as inferior to really smaller natures with cooler heads. But it should be remembered that he who never mistook men from the first called the impulsive and oft-stumbling Peter the Rock (John 1: 42). The stony-ground hearers, on the other hand, are that numerous class who in any new thing see only its favorable aspects, and sanguinely follow, expecting nothing else. But it takes a deeper nature than theirs to weigh the difficulties which come with all true good in life. Hence they are too weak in soul to encounter difficulties, and with the first experience thereof, as Mark expresses it (R. V.), 'having no root in themselves, straightway they stumble.'" — *Prof. W. H. Thomson, M.D.*

And so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the world's sake, immediately they are offended (Am. R. "stumble") as over some obstacle that causes them to fall.

Luke adds, **and in time of temptation fall away.** By affliction or by persecution, or by evil companions, or their own appetites. So long as they are in the popular current, and there is nothing to test their principles, they appear all right. But as soon as any real test comes, they fall away. And this is one reason why God permits trials and temptations and persecutions, in order that we may know in time whether we are true disciples or not.

We can learn an effective lesson from Bunyan's story of Pliable and Christian in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. Christian, awakened by Evangelist to the fact that he was living in the City of Destruction, started to go to the heavenly city; and when his wife and children and neighbors tried to persuade him to come back, the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on crying Life! Life! Eternal Life! One of his neighbors named Pliable, fearing to remain in the City of Destruction, was urged on by the prospect which, so they were assured, awaits them if they reach the far end of the narrow way; the golden gate, the white robes, the angelic company, the face of the King. They were conversing together on these things, when on a sudden, heedless of the ground, they both stumble into the Slough of Despond, and struggle miserably in the mire. Both at length climb out on to dry land; but on opposite sides. Christian lands on the farther bank, and plods on towards the wicket gate.

7. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

14. The sower soweth the word.

15. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17. And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word.

Pliable scrambles out, wet and drenched with his back to heaven and his face to the City of Destruction, and leaves Christian, with an angry farewell "Is this the happiness you have told me all this while of? you shall possess the brave country for me." Archdeacon Moule thus applies this story to the Parable, — "Pliable had no root in himself. He endured for a while. Christian had root. Christian was convinced of sin. For him, his perseverance was a matter of life or death. Pliable showed no sign of real disturbance of soul. He was pleasurably attracted by the prospect of a radiant future, and he liked, in respect of human sympathy, to be in company with one who was setting out in great earnest towards it. But he had no root in himself."

THE SEED SOWN AMONG THORNS. THORNY GROUND HEARERS, v. 7. And some fell among thorns. "Among the seeds of thorns or briars, which afterwards came up." — *Int. Crit. Com.* Where the soil was good, but was preoccupied by roots and seeds, if not by thorn-plants. There are a great many more thorny plants in Palestine than in America, and these plants love the wheatfields. The Greek word, "thorns," used here is the one used in describing Christ's crown of thorns. It is an indefinite word, and the plant cannot be positively identified. "There are not less than 50 genera and 200 species of plants in Syria and Palestine furnished with thorns and prickles. There is probably no country on earth of the same extent which has so many plants with prickles and thorns as the Holy Land. . . . Every here and there we may see small stalks protruding. They are the stumps of the most noxious weed of Gennesaret, the strong and rapidly growing prickly *Astragalus*, a coarse, perennial plant with its roots penetrating, as we found by experiment, several feet deep." — *Tristram*.

And choked it, and it yielded no fruit. "The first did not spring up, being picked up by the birds; the second sprang up but did not grow, withered by the heat; the third sprouted and grew up but yielded no (ripe) fruit, choked by thorns." — *Expos. Greek Test.* The thorns choked the wheat by crowding their roots, absorbing the nutriment from the soil, and shading them from the sunshine, so that little of the wheat came to maturity. "The earth looks like that of the rest of the field; and the farmer plows in his seed with a good heart, in hopes of an abundant return. But the thorns spring up with the wheat, and, being much stronger, their roots soon twine about those of the wheat, and absorb all the water from the ground, and their plants overshadow the green blades. And so the plants either make no seeds, or so few and poor ones that the farmer does not care to pick out the stalks from the thorns, and he either burns them altogether, or threshes out all as food for his donkey." — *Schaff's Bible Dictionary*.

Christ's Interpretation, vs. 18, 19. First. These are . . . such as hear (Am. R. "have heard") the word. The good seed has been planted, and in good, rich soil, with vast possibilities of harvest; in persons who are active, skilful, talented, capable; and who ought to be powers for good, and for the building up of the Kingdom of God.

19. And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

19. **And the cares of this world.** Absorption in worldly interests and duties, and labors; anxieties about our business, our household duties, our school studies, our athletics, all good things in themselves. They are not to be neglected. But there must be such trust in God, such devotion to higher things, that even the daily cares shall help us on toward God. The good is often the enemy of the best. "The old proverb, 'Of two evils choose the less,' is out of date. To-day the exhortation must run, 'Of two good things choose the better.' We must ask concerning every claim that is presented to us, not merely 'Is this good in itself?' but 'Is this the very best I can give my life to just now?'" — *George H. Hubbard.*

And the deceitfulness of riches. Not merely the possession of riches, but the desire for them. There is ever a glamour, an illusive promise in riches, that lures men on to pursuing them at all costs. Riches that deceive by giving us the impression that they are able to bestow what they cannot give; which make things seem honest that are not so; which lead people to be unjust, to oppress the poor by small wages, to seek sharp bargains, to condescend to graft, to be stingy in giving to the needy, to be so busy in seeking riches as to be unable to give time to the service of Christ and his kingdom.

The lusts of other things entering in. The temptations of pleasure and appetite, the attractions of the world and the flesh, the visions of delight. All these **choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.**

Browning's Pied Piper of Hamelin. The desire for riches is well represented by Browning in his "Pied Piper of Hamelin," when the song led all the children of the town to follow him into the dark cave from which they never came forth. But one little lame boy was unable to reach the cave, and he told the people the entrancing vision which charmed the children tripping and skipping to "run merrily after the wonderful music with shouting and laughter."

"For he led us, he said, to a joyous land
Joining the town, and just at hand,
Where waters gushed, and fruit trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new."

THE GOOD SEED IN GOOD GROUND. BEARING ABUNDANT GOOD FRUIT, vs. 8, 20. These are they which are sown on good ground; such as (1) hear the word, (2) and receive it (3) in an honest and good heart (4) and keep it (5) and bring forth fruit (6) with patience (Mark and Luke).

And bring forth fruit. The fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 22); those recorded in the Sermon on the Mount, in the 25th chapter of Matthew, in the 13th chapter of First Corinthians, and everywhere in the Bible. It will make the Christian life like the tree of life in the paradise of God, bearing twelve manner of fruits; and its leaves are for the healing of the nations.

The School of Practice. 1. Blessed are those that bring forth fruit a hundred-fold; but those that bring forth thirty and sixtyfold will have their reward, if they have done the best they could with their opportunities.

2. This requires patience; persevering, earnest care in conquering all enemies that would destroy the good seed, and in culturing and cherishing the growing harvest.

3. The great mass of good seed is sown in the broad fields, and bears much fruit.

4. The harvest is of the same kind as the seed. If we sow bad seeds, of thistles, thorns, upas-trees, the harvest can only be thistles, thorns, upas-trees. There is no escaping this law. And it helps us to understand why good men do not always receive so much of this world's riches as bad men do. Good men sow seeds of character, of usefulness, of love, of spiritual joy, and they reap what they sow, and so much of other and worldly blessings as are consistent with these, and naturally flow from them.

5. Some harvests are soon matured; others are a long time in growing and ripening. Some ripen in a few weeks; it is years before others bear fruit. Let us not be discouraged if the fruit we can bear is slow in ripening.

God's Farm. It is well to bear in mind the difficulties in producing the best fruits and flowers even in a small garden; how much care and skill are required, how many enemies are to be overcome; how much we can gain from what others have experienced. A farm or garden can be made an excellent illustration of this parable and may be a continual reminder of the ways in which we can bear good fruit.

In 1 Cor. 3:9, we are told "Ye are God's husbandry," that is, "tilled land," God's farm, or garden, in which He has sown good seed and cared for it; sent sun and rain and all good influences abundantly; so that He can say, "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?"

Shall we not all try with all our powers to bear good fruit in His world?

LESSON VIII. — February 24.

JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES: THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM. — Mark 4:21-34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.* — ISA. 11:9.

Devotional Reading: Isa. 1:1-10.

Additional Material for Teachers: Matt. 13:24-50; Isa. 2:2-4; Ezek. 47:1-12; Rev. 21:1-8, 22-27; 22:1-5.

Primary Topic: Jesus Telling a Story about Growing.

Memory Verse: Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. — Luke 2:52.

Intermediate Topic: The Importance of Small Beginnings.

Memory Verses: Matt. 13:31, 32.

Additional Material: Matt. 13:24-50; Isa. 2:2-4; 11:1-10; Rev. 21:1-8.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

These picturesque stories are always interesting to young and old, because they are the expression of great spiritual facts and truths, that are visibly illustrated in the facts and truths around us. There is opportunity for self-activity, for service to others, for clearer views of duty.

MEMORIZE.

Isa. 2:3; Matt. 13:31, 32; Rev. 21:2, 3.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The parable of the lamp.
The dull ears and the hearing ears.
To him that hath — to him that hath not.
Parable of the seed growing secretly.
Spiritual application of "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear."
Parable of the mustard seed.
Application to the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Mark; and books on the Parables named in our last Lesson.

On the Parable of the Lamp, see J. Edgar Park on *The Wonder of His Gracious Words* (Sermon on the Mount). W. Boyd Carpenter on *The Great Character of Christ*.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn, A.D. 28. Immediately following the last lesson.

Place. — On the shore of the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum.

John the Baptist still imprisoned in Castle Machærus near the Dead Sea.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How the Kingdom of Heaven Grew and is Growing.

- I. PARABLE OF THE LAMP, vs. 21-25.
- II. PARABLE OF THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY, vs. 26-29.
- III. PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED, vs. 30-32.

THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

On the seed growing secretly, see Prof. W. H. Thomson's *Brain and Personality*; Prof. Wm. James' chapter on Habit in his *Psychology*; Professor Drummond's *Programme of Christianity*; *Life for a Life*, pp. 19, 20; and *The Changed Life*, "The Alchemy of Influence." Pres. Hitchcock's *Religion and Science*, "The Catalytic Power of the Gospel." *The Growth of the Kingdom*, by Sidney L. and Edward L. Gulick (50¢, Pilgrim Press). E. E. Hale's *Ten Times One is Ten*.

21. And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22. For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

I. THE PARABLE OF THE LAMP, vs. 21-25. This parable follows close upon the Parable of the Sower in our last lesson.

It is probable that verses 21-25 were spoken in private in some pause in his public address.

The Master. When God created the world, the first word he spoke to the chaos without form and void, wrapped in darkness, was **Let there be light**; and there was light.

According to Prof. Percival Lowell of Harvard, in the chapter "The Genesis of a World," in his *Mars*, "the first stage in the history of a planet is the sun stage, hot enough to emit light."

And when Jesus the Son of God came into the world of moral twilight, the first words concerning him were, — **In Him was Life**; and the **Life was the Light of Men**.

Light is everything to us. All things are practically non-existent without light. Light set in motion by life is the source of life, of beauty, of manifested reality, of warmth, comfort, and joy, of health and of power. Now, what light does for the natural world Jesus does for the world of man, for mind, soul, and spirit. He reveals God, and heaven, and truth; he shows the way; he cheers, comforts, vivifies, renews.

His Disciples. Jesus said to his followers whom he had been teaching, — **Ye are the light of the world**. Therefore "so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5: 14-16).

To impress this duty on his disciples, Jesus reminds them of one of their most familiar scenes. "Every evening of their lives since their childhood they had seen the one lamp of their simple cottage trimmed and set upon the projecting stone in the cottage wall, its accustomed stand, that it might give light to all in the house." — *J. Edgar Park*. Are any so foolish as to put the **candle** (Am. R. "lamp") **under a bushel**? The household measure, kept as "security against imposition, both in buying and selling. The capacity was nearer a peck than a bushel." — *Morison*. Or **under a (the) bed**? "The Roman triclinium or raised couch used at formal meals." — *Morison*. And **not to be set on a candlestick**? (Am. R. "put on the stand.")

"As there is no light more useless than that which is hidden under a bushel measure, so there is no life less use to the world than his who is nominally a follower of Jesus, but whose life is not lighting up by its influence the dark places

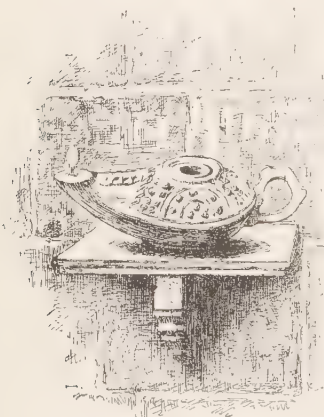
of the world, and helping to dispel the clouds of ignorance and lust and greed."

— *J. Edgar Park*.

"All may be lights, but the brilliancy of the lights may differ as one star differeth from another. 'You can shine as a glow worm if not as a star.'

"Let your light shine. Let it be placed where it can be seen. The powers of life are to be used. 'If our virtues go not forth of us, 'twere all alike as if we had them not.'" — *W. Boyd Carpenter*.

22. **For there is nothing hid that shall not be manifested** (Am. R. "save that it should be manifested"). The meaning is, If the Gospel was for the moment treated as a secret, it was so only because this temporary secrecy was essential to its successful proclamation after the Ascension. — *Prof. Sweete*. Erasmus paraphrases: "Think not that I wish that which I commit to you to be concealed forever. A light has been kindled in you by me, that by your ministry it may dispel the darkness



Ancient Lamp on a Wall Bracket.

23. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.

25. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

of the whole world," for I am the light of the world. And ye are the light of the world. For Jesus kindled the light in them.

23. A solemn call to attention.

24. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear. "Look well what it is that ye hear, *i.e.* weigh its meaning." With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you. "This proverb occurs in several contexts (Matt. 7: 2; Luke 6: 38) with different applications. Here the sense is; 'your attention to the teaching will be the measure of the profit you will receive from it.'" — *Prof. Swete*. "You will be dealt with, as to truth, as you deal with others. Hide it, and it shall be hidden from you; impart it, and it will be imparted to you." — *W. N. Clark, D.D.* **Shall more be given.** More than they had before they imparted it.

25. **For he that hath, to him shall be given.** This is a general law of human activity. He that hath, that is, not merely receives, but makes what he has a part of life's capital, knows its powers and uses it. **To him shall be given.** The young man that saves of his money, has the means and experience for making more. Every grade in the school is the means for reaching the next higher grade. Every victory over temptation is the way to new victories. Every duty well done prepares one for larger duties. The way to the best of life is like climbing Jacob's ladder.

The Spiritual Multiplication Table. Every additional gift or virtue or talent in a man is not merely so much added to him, but is a multiplier, for it increases the value of each and every other gift. Add common sense to genius, and the man is multiplied many fold. Add to these zeal, consecration, grace, and love, and you multiply him many fold more. One note is a sound; add a score or two more, and you have an anthem. One color, no matter how beautiful, is monotonous; add other colors and you have a cathedral window.

He that hath not, who neglects his opportunities, refuses to make good use of his talents, wastes his time, refuses God's good gifts, as the truths of the Bible, the Church, the Sunday School, **from him shall be taken even that which he hath.**

Illustration. How Fish Became Blind. The fish in Mammoth Cave, Ky., are entirely blind, from their long existence as a race in perfect darkness, although the fish of the same species in the streams outside in the light have good eyes.

Illustration. The Skitzlanders. In one number of the "Household Words," Dickens describes a visit to what he calls Skitzland. A man, digging a hole in his garden, broke through the crust of the earth and fell into the interior. Here he found a strange land, the peculiarity of which was, that, while every person was born physically perfect, at a certain age any part of the body which had not been used was lost entirely, leaving only the bones. Thus a coachman had only stomach and hands; a lawyer had no legs, but a massive jaw; some fashionable young ladies were only a pair of eyes and a bunch of nerves; the schoolmaster had only his heart left. There is a large measure of truth in this as to the spiritual life. The punishment for not doing good and bearing fruit to God, is the loss of power and opportunity to bear fruit.



Ancient Lamp.

26. And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

27. And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

II. PARABLE OF THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY, vs. 26-29. A PARABLE OF FAITH AND HOPE. So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground. Am. R. "Upon the earth." The kingdom of God always begins by seed sown, in the individual and in the community, as earthly crops start from seed cast into the ground.

The Good Seed is the teaching of Jesus, the Bible truths and principles, all the truths of salvation, instruction, good examples, knowledge of God, and the like.

The Unseen Growth. 27. Then the seed must be left by the sower out of his sight, to the life God has given it, and to the forces of nature. No man can give seed life or make it grow; but the seed will spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. "Modern science," says Professor Thomson, "has failed to find the slightest explanation of what the life in a seed is." Still it grows, while no man knoweth either how it begins to grow, or how it grows from the blade to the ear, and then on till it is ready for the sickle.

This silent process is essential to the best results; sometimes it is short, sometimes it continues for months. The hundreds of bulbs in my garden must be planted in the autumn for their spring blooming. For in the darkness the roots grow; and unless there are well-developed roots, the blooms in spring will be small and feeble. For the same reason hyacinth bulbs must be kept in the dark for weeks if we would be successful in flowers. All our common seeds must have this silent period for growth.

28. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, through the energies and powers with which God has endowed it. They are wonderful. They are more and greater than any one knows; but while they are being discovered and used more and more yet the process is spontaneous and shrouded in mystery.

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand.

Little flower; — but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all
I should know what God and man is."

But in due time the results of this unseen growth become visible in the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. When there are no visible results in due time, the seeds are dead. Living seeds must express themselves in foliage, flowers, and fruit, according to the kind of seeds one allows to be planted in his heart and mind.

Watching Flowers Grow, but only after the hidden seeds send up their shoots above the ground. "The moving-picture machine is now used to show the blossoming of a flower or the development of a butterfly as readily as it does any other phase of life. Every one knows that such a machine may be run either fast or slow, so that the series of events represented appear to take place faster or slower than they do in nature. One may now see a flower grow, bud, blossom, and put forth seed, all in five minutes, in a moving-picture show. Says a writer in *The Inventive Age*: 'One remarkable fact about the moving-picture camera is that it is able to reproduce not only the swiftest objects, but the slowest as well. It is now possible to exhibit pictures of a flower in the different stages of growth, and of the transition of a blossom into fruit. Recent experiments have resulted in a process that throws on the screen the changing of a rose-bud into a full-blown rose, the burst of a lily from its leafy prison, and the slow unfolding of a fern.'

"The operation of exhibiting anything like the development of a flower from birth to maturity requires, of course, considerable time, though the result consumes not more than five minutes when thrown upon the screen."

One of the most beautiful and delightful sights that men or angels can ever see is the unfolding of the virtues and noble qualities in children and youth from the good seeds planted in their hearts and homes in the home or the Sunday School.

"We must not infer that because we cannot see what is going on in our own mind, or in our child's mind, that therefore it is doing well. It may be doing badly. The seeds of evil weeds may be secretly growing under the surface. . . . That depends upon whether we have well prepared the ground, planted good and well-selected seed, kept out the weeds and stones, kept the necessary fences in good order; and in all other things have done our part wisely and well." — *Rev. E. Craig Mitchell.*

One writer speaks deprecatingly of revivals, as if they were attempting to accomplish the whole process of Christian growth. But instead of that they pre-suppose the long period of secret growth, and now come like the warm sunshine, the balmy air, the gentle rain to help the soul to come into the open and grow from the blade to the full corn in the ear.

The Unconscious Goodness of the Righteous in the vision of the Judgment in Matt. 25, is one of the proofs that their virtues were sincere and true. Unconscious goodness is the highest form of goodness. The beginner in music counts his measures, and studies on what note he shall place each finger; but the perfect musician strikes the right notes and expresses the right emotions almost as naturally as he breathes or as the birds warble their morning songs.

Hudson in his *Lectures on Shakespeare*, keenly remarks, "We are apt to estimate the merit of our good deeds according to the struggle we make in doing them; whereas, the greater our virtue, the less we shall have to struggle in order to do them, and it is purely the weakness and imperfection of our virtue that makes it so hard to do well. Accordingly we find that he who does no duty without being goaded up to it is conscious of much more virtue than he has; while he who does every duty as a thing of course and a matter of delight, is *unconscious of his virtue, simply because he has so much of it.*"

Professor Thomson closes his teaching of this parable with these words of comfort: "With many individual Christians the subject of their spiritual growth is too often one of anxiety, because they cannot recognize its daily increase. The best cure is for the man to go about his Master's business as the man in the parable did about his, and let the seed alone, for he cannot tell either how it grows, or when it is growing most." It may be that in our times of depression, of hard-fought battles, of failures to reach our ideal, but never ceasing "to strive and wait and pray," we may be growing most rapidly in grace.

Progress of a Nation. The old histories, excepting the Bible, used to dwell chiefly on wars and revolutions and the actions of kings and chieftains. But modern historians, not ignoring these, tell us that underneath all these, often in spite of them, are the real powers that make for the progress and growth of the nation. Thus Green, in his *History of England*, says that during the Wars of the Roses, which chiefly affected the leaders, there was going on the steady progress of the people in literature, religion, and wealth.

Opinions have changed so gradually that the people hardly realize that they have changed at all. The great movements of progress, — the changes in education, the emancipation of women, in business morality, in federation, in peace, in social customs, in freedom, in temperance, in missions, in the churches, have all made their gains in this way. They have been like the silent gathering of the electricity in the clouds, which at length bursts out in the storm, and clears the whole atmosphere.

So God taught Elijah in his despondency because he could not see the results of his labors. The great power of God in making the nation, was not in the storm, or the earthquake, or the fire, but in the still small voice.

The Story of Foreign Missions is probably the most perfect example of the principle of this parable. The missionaries preached the Gospel, and taught the people concerning Jesus. They founded schools. But for many years the progress was very slow and discouraging. Men said of them that their cause was hopeless because more heathen were born than the number of converts gained. There was almost a century of this unrealized work of redemption. But within the last quarter of a century there has been a vast change. Missionaries are acknowledged to be statesmen. All over the heathen world the hidden seed has sprung up, and is openly changing the people. The blade, the ear, and the rapid progress toward the full and ripening grain is one of the greatest marvels of the age, seen and known of all who have eyes to see.

"Heaven is not reached by a single day;
But we build the ladder by which we rise

From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies
And we mount to the summit round by round."

The harvest is come. The purpose of the seed is accomplished.

30. And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31. *It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:*

32. But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*.

34. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

III. PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED. THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST, vs. 30-32. *The Natural Basis of the Parable.* And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? Am. R. "How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth?" **It is like a grain of mustard seed,** good seed, living seed, seed that could produce a harvest, **when it is sown in the earth,** as Jesus was sowing the good seed of the kingdom. **Is less** (Am. R. "though it be less") **than all the seeds that be in the earth,** not spoken scientifically, but in the popular speech of the day. "It was a common way of saying that a thing was very small, and of making a size comparison emphatic." The mustard seed was the smallest seed used in Jewish husbandry (*Wiener*). From that standpoint the expression was literally accurate.

32. **Becometh greater than all the herbs of their gardens and fields.** And shooteth out great branches, great in comparison with other herbs; so large that the fowls of the air (Am. R. "birds of the heaven") may lodge under the shadow of it. Professor Hackett on his way to Carmel found a forest of mustard trees then in blossom, full grown, in some cases, six, seven, and nine feet high, with a stem or trunk an inch or more in thickness, throwing out branches on every side. While he was looking "a bird alighted on one of the branches, and warbled forth a strain of the richest music."

"In the proper season the traveler on Gennesaret may ride by mustard-bushes as high as his horse, and alive with flocks of merry bullfinches or of rock-pigeons feeding upon the seeds." — *Prof. Thomson*.

Interpretation of the Parable. 1. This parable was Jesus' assurance of the final success of the Kingdom of Heaven. "Our Lord recognized that to the uninstructed, ordinary observer, His kingdom must in its origin appear insignificant, 'the least of all seeds.' Open the histories of His time, and your eyes are dazzled with the magnificence of other monarchs, but Jesus is barely named. It was no discredit to the most learned and accurate of historians to know nothing of Jesus Christ. What was there in this obscure teacher to regenerate the world? . . . But at the very moment when our Lord was most conscious of the poor figure His kingdom made in the eyes of men, He was absolutely confident of its final greatness, because, small as it was it was the nature of the seed to grow. It had a vital force in it that nothing could kill. . . . The crucifiers of the Lord were fulfilling His words, — 'That cross which you are setting up, and which you will take down before the sun is set, shall stand in the thoughts of countless millions as the point of earth most illuminated by the light of heaven.' " — *Prof. Marcus Dods, D.D.* And that blood shall be the redeeming power of the world.

2. The emphasis is on the smallness of the beginnings of Christianity. No sect, no party in Palestine, no known nation began in so small, unnoticed, and apparently feeble a manner.

"Whatever be the thoughts of men about Jesus, none can deny that his forecast in this parable has been quite fulfilled, in that his kingdom in its external development has been the greatest growth of history." — *Prof. Thomson*. And never so great as to-day, never such sudden and stupendous results, such marvellous developments at home and abroad.

"Where the vanguard rests to-day
The rear will camp to-morrow."

I heard a statesman missionary from India say that the religions of India looked upon the Present as the Iron Age, with their Golden Age in the past. But with Christianity the Golden Age is in the future, the kingdom is growing towards its Ideal and its Goal, and growing more and more rapidly.

Not only is Christianity, — the kingdom of Christ in the making, — the greatest kingdom in the world, the most moral, prosperous, happy, benevolent, active in good works, but it has grown rapidly in the last century, beyond any previous age save that of the apostles, toward the goal of the Kingdom of Heaven.

3. The branches may represent "the various divisions and portions of his kingdom in different countries and in different methods of work," but all with one spirit, and one main stem.

4. The birds of the air may refer to the institutions, hospitals, colleges, sciences, educational discoveries, all the methods and appliances of civilization which flourish best and most under the light of Christianity. These are not necessarily directly under the Church, but they are a part of the Church's work, carried on almost entirely by its members.

Consider how many good things have grown from very, very small beginnings, — the Sunday Schools, Christian Endeavor, and other Young People's Meetings, Missions, Young Men's Christian Associations, Young Women's Christian Associations, and hundreds of other similar things blossom on the branches of the tree that grew out of the smallest of seeds.

LESSON IX. — March 3.

JESUS BRINGING PEACE. — Mark 4:35-5:20.

PRINT Mark 4:35-41; 5:15-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Jehovah hath done great things for us; Whereof we are glad.* — Ps. 126:3.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 147 : 1-5, 14-18.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 8 : 23-34 ; Luke 8 : 22-39 ; Matt. 14 : 22-33 ; Luke 9 : 37-43a.

Primary Lesson Material : Mark 4 : 35-41.

Memory Verse : Even the winds and the sea obey him. — Mark 4 : 41.

Intermediate Topic : Telling the Good News about the Prince of Life.

Memory Verse : Mark 5 : 19.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The teacher may well begin this lesson with the following illustration taken from the *Bible Student*.

"You remember how in Homer's *Odyssey*, Ulysses, with fond anticipation, returned to his home in Ithaca, but his family did not recognize him; even his wife denied her husband, so changed was he after his absence of twenty years in the hardships and long privations of war. He cast in his mind what to do, and finally called for his bow, so stout that none but himself had ever been able to draw it. Though age had weakened him, to his own surprise, he found it bent to his masterful touch, until the bow-string touched his ear. At the sight the wife threw herself into his fond

embrace, saying, 'I know now that you are my own dear husband — Ulysses.'

"Beloved, the one thing that makes us certain that Jesus of Nazareth was the very Son of God, is this, that when he walked this earth he was Master of his own creation; and it never failed to bend to his touch, or become obedient to his will. The miracle told that Creation's Master had come."

The cure of the demoniac also proved that Jesus of Nazareth was Master of diseases, and demons and all evil powers, as we see demonstrated in this lesson, for our comfort and faith.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 39-41.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn of A.D. 28. Perhaps two months after the choosing of the Twelve, and the Sermon on the Mount.

Place of the Stilling of the Tempest. — The Sea of Galilee, on the voyage from Capernaum to the country of the Gadarenes.

Place of the Cure of the Demoniac. — On the S.E. shore of the Sea of Galilee, where there were towns called Gadara, and Gerasa or Gergesa. Three names are given to the people in the Gospels, Gadarenes, Gerasenes, and Gergesenes. Some of the names may be of larger regions including others. Just as I am now writing in Auburndale, which is Ward IV of the city of Newton, which in turn is a part of greater Boston, I date my letters Auburndale, I pay taxes as a citizen of Newton, and my letters come under Boston P. O. control.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The cause of storms on the Sea of Galilee.

What lessons can you learn from Jesus from the storm?

What was the effect upon the disciples?

Of what things in life was the storm a symbol and illustration?

What peace and strength does Jesus bring to us from our hard and strenuous times?

The voyage of life.

What is a demoniac?

Of what is his sad case a symbol?

How would the demons entering the swine complete the cure of the man?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on the Gospels. Works on the Miracles, by Trench, W. M. Taylor, Laidlaw, Spurgeon, Howson, Lang, etc.

Christ's Acted Parables, a Study of the Miracles, by Dr. Burton. *Miracles and*

Christianity, by Prof. Johannes Wendland.

On demons see the article in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*; *Demon Possession and Allied Themes*, by Dr. Nevius; publications of the Society for Psychical Research; Henry Maudsley's *Physiology and Pathology of the Mind*, chap. 3, pp. 306-316; Forbes Winslow's *Obscure Diseases of the Brain*, pp. 179-211.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Two Great Miracles Illustrating how Jesus Gives Peace.

- I. STILLING THE TEMPEST. Peace be still, to the stormy sea.
- II. REDEEMING A DEMONIAIC. Peace be still, to the tempest in the Soul.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Life compared to a sea in Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations* on Matthew, p. 172. Longfellow's *Poems*, "Building of the Ship." Prof. Henry Drummond's *Pax Vobiscum*. Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, vol. vi. "Peace." Mrs. Stowe's hymn, "When winds are raging in the upper ocean." "Jesus, Saviour, pilot me." Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar."

Dr. Worcester's *Religion and Medicine*, "Diseases of the Subconscious," pp. 213-217. Dr. Pierce's *Dissociations of Personality* (1906). Prof. William James' *Psychology*, Vol. I. Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Stilling the Tempest, by Doré,* Dietrich. *Curing the Demoniac*, by Doré.

Cole's *Voyage of Life*, a set of four pictures.

Two Miracles, One Illustrating Jesus' Power over Nature; the Other Showing His Control Over the Most Dreaded Powers that are Destroying both Mind and Body Together

I. THE CALMING OF THE TEMPEST, vs. 35-41. On the evening of the day when Jesus taught the multitudes the parables we studied in Lessons VII and VIII, and the other parables recorded in Matt. 13.

A Busy Day in the Life of Jesus. "It had been an eventful and a weary day in the life of Jesus. The morning began with miracles; by noon an immense throng had gathered around him; and all the afternoon he taught them in parables. With the evening came the exhaustion of his body and the reaction upon his highly wrought mind. He can find no rest among the ever-accompanying crowd at Capernaum; so he resolves to seek the quiet of the sea, and its thinly populated eastern shores." — *Hurlbut*.

35. And the same day when the even was come, Jesus saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side of the lake. Spoken to the twelve who are part of

35. And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

37. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

them in, and part around, the boat, or going in and out according to circumstances. The object seems to have been to escape from the crowd, because Jesus was utterly wearied by his long day's work with the multitudes. His sleep during the storm confirms this view.

The Voyage Begun. 36. And when they had sent away (rather, as in the Am. R. "leaving") the multitude, escaping from them because they pressed so eagerly about him for more of his teaching. They took him even as he was, in the ship (Am. R. "boat"). That is without any change of clothing, and in the same boat in which he had been teaching.

"The boat puts off from the shore, followed by a flotilla of boats filled with people trying to accompany him on his voyage. Tired out with his incessant labors he lay down at once in the stern and fell fast asleep on the cushion." — *Prof. Laidlaw.*

"Some of the people got into boats to be nearer the speaker." — *Prof. Bruce* in *Expositor's Greek Test.* "Professor Gould thinks that *with him* implied that these boats accompanied Jesus and his disciples." — *Int. Crit. Com.* And thus learned a new lesson of the power and helpfulness of Jesus.

The boat in which Jesus lay asleep sailed toward the southeast from Capernaum, and reached the Gadarene country after the storm, a voyage of about eight miles.

The Tempest. 37. And there arose a great storm of wind. The Greek designates a furious storm, a hurricane. Matthew uses *seismos* "a shaking," as an earthquake,

such a commotion of the marine elements as corresponds to an earthquake. Dr. W. M. Thomson says that on a certain occasion, in his experience, "The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to rush down toward the lake; and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore next morning, the face of the lake was like a huge boiling caldron. The wind howled down every wave from the northeast and east with such a fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast. To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low, six hundred feet lower than the ocean; that the vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of the Hauran, and upward to snowy Hermon; that the watercourses have cut out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of the lake, and that these act like giant funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains." — *Land and Book, new ed., vol. II., p. 351.*

And the waves beat into the ship (Am. R. "boat"), so that it was now full (Am. R. "filling"), was becoming full of water, and likely to be swamped in the middle of the lake.



From a photograph of Doré's picture.
Jesus Stilling the Tempest.

38. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow : and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish ?

39. And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful ? how is it that ye have no faith ?

41. And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him ?

Jesus Asleep in the Storm, v. 38. He was in the hinder part of the ship (Am. R. "the stern of the boat"), asleep on a pillow (Am. R. "the cushion"). "Why did he sleep ? Just because he was weary. He slept because his human life was real, and not merely played or acted. He slept because he was tired," exhausted with his strenuous work during the day.

Here he shows his human nature, as his stilling the tempest displayed his divine nature. The two elements together make a perfect Saviour.

The Disciples Awake the Master. In their terror they gather around the sleeping Master, and one after another, or several together, cry out (in the abrupt form of the original Greek, reproduced in the Revisions),

Save, Lord, we perish ! (Matthew.)

Teacher, carest thou not that we perish ? (Mark.)

Master, master, we perish ! (Luke.)

Some one puts it thus : Little Faith prayed, "Save us" ; Much Fear cried, "We perish" ; Distrust urged, "Carest thou not ?" More Faith said, "Lord" ; Discipleship called out "Teacher" ; Faint Hope cried, "Master, thou with authority." The whole made a vivid scene.

The Master's "Peace, be Still," v. 39. And he arose and rebuked the wind. As a master rebukes his slave for disobedience. "Observe the poetic parallelism of this verse ; wind and sea separately addressed and the corresponding effects separately specified ; lulled wind, calmed sea." — *Expositor's Greek Test*. Peace. Be silent. Be still. "Greek 'be muzzled,' like an ox. The same word that Christ used to the demon (Mark 1 : 25). The tense expresses the idea, 'Be still and continue so.' Peace, be still are probably the very words that Christ used." — *Sweete*. And the wind ceased. Greek, "grew weary," tired of its fruitless struggle. "A beautiful and picturesque word. The sea sank to rest as if exhausted by its own beating." — *Vincent*.

"This miracle shows our Lord's two-fold nature. As a man He was weary and needed rest ; as God He was able to calm the wind and the sea." — *G. E. J. Milner, on Mark*.

Note. There need be no difficulty about this miracle. Every man has by his will some power over nature, not by breaking its laws but by using them ; and it would be strange if God could not do with His infinite power on a large scale what man can do in his narrow sphere. To a person looking upon these things from the outside there is nothing more incredible in the one than the other.

From this point of view it is interesting to note the experiments of ancient and modern times in soothing the waves of a storm by the action of oil on the surface. "Pliny, the naturalist, had quite a deal to say concerning the action of oil on waves." The reports of the U. S. Hydrographic Office give instances of saving vessels by oiling the sea. There are a great many facts showing how vessels have withstood the heaviest gales by the employment of a small quantity of oil dropping slowly upon the surface of the sea.

40. Why are ye so fearful ? How is it that ye have no faith ? Better, as in Am. R., "have ye not yet faith ?" Have you not yet learned to trust me, after all my teachings, and all the miracles you have seen me do ? Have you not learned the lesson of trust after so many lessons in my school ? They had some faith, but sadly needed to pray, "Lord, increase our faith." Jesus was doubtless looking forward to the time, less than a year and a half distant, when they would be exposed to more terrible tempests and darkness and a stormier sea, as the storms of persecution fell upon them, while he was in the hands of his enemies, crucified, and afterwards unseen in the heavens, as just now he had been asleep in the tempest on Galilee.

41. And they feared exceedingly in the presence of this mighty power. And said . . . What manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey him ?

This was the first miracle of the kind that Jesus wrought. It made them realize that Jesus had vaster powers than they had even dreamed. It gave them a new vision and assurance of Jesus as the Son of God.

APPLICATIONS TO DAILY LIFE.

I. This experience of the disciples was a lesson in Christ's School of Faith, wherein he taught his disciples the lesson of faith in him, wrought into their very natures, and thus prepared them for the greater moral tempests which were soon to assail them. Thus, too, our lives, our experiences, are a school of Christ, in which we are to learn the same lesson of trust, clearer visions of God's goodness and power, and thus gain more of the heavenly character.

II. *The Voyage of Life.* Life is like a voyage across an untried sea.

"'Tis wonderful! And yet, my boy, just such is life. Life is a sea as fathomless, As wide, as terrible, and yet sometimes as calm and beautiful. The light of heaven Smiles on it, and 'tis decked with every hue of glory and of joy. Anon dark clouds Arise, contending winds of fate go forth, and Hope sits weeping o'er a general wreck. And thou must sail upon this sea a long eventful voyage. The wise *may* suffer wreck, The foolish *must*. Oh, then, be early wise. Learn from the mariner his skilful art — To ride upon the waves and catch the breeze and dare the threatening storm and trace a path, 'Mid countless dangers, to the destined port, unerringly secure. Oh, learn from him To station quick-eyed Prudence at the helm, to guard thy sail from Passion's sudden blasts, And make Religion thy magnetic guide, which, though it trembles as it lowly lies, Points to the light that changes not, — in heaven." — *Anon.*

III. Cole's series of four pictures on "The Voyage of Life" are very interesting and suggestive. They represent the four periods of human life, Childhood, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age. In each picture there is a guardian angel, sometimes seen plainly, and sometimes, as in the picture of *Manhood*, unseen by the voyager. He seems asleep or hidden, but the angels can see that he is ever with us to guide and guard. Selections from the verses printed under each will give hints of their symbolic meaning.

1. CHILDHOOD

"Who shall preserve thee, beautiful child?
Keep thee as thou art now,
Bring thee a spirit undefiled,
At God's pure throne to bow?"

2. YOUTH

"The golden palace of my God
Towering above the clouds I see,
Beyond the cherub's bright abode,
Higher than angels' thought can be."

3. MANHOOD

"When by the dreadful tempest borne
High on the broken wave,
We know thou art not slow to hear
Nor impotent to save."

4. OLD AGE

"A beam from heaven is sent to cheer
The Christian on his road,
And angels are attending near
To bear him home to God."

IV. In every life there come times of stress and storm, temptations, dangers, sickness, troubles, losses, sometimes sins, when we cry out like the disciples, "Lord save us! carest thou not that we perish?" But to every one who turns to Jesus and our Father in Heaven, his voice, when the best time comes, will say to the storm, **Peace, be still.**

"I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his loving care."
— *Whittier.*

V. Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar* is for many a comforting message and illustration of the way God sometimes speaks to his people when the time draws near for the farewell to earth and the welcome into the heavenly glory.

Tennyson was lying on his sick bed, peaceful and painless. At the request of his nurse he wrote a hymn, and in the morning handed to her a scrap of paper on which was written "Crossing the Bar." In addition to its "flawless perfection," its marvelous power lies in the fact that the poem is a picture parable of the scene from his own windows, as he looked over the ocean. I shall never forget the afternoon when I walked on the beach beside his estate, and saw vividly with natural and spiritual eyes the whole story of "Crossing the Bar" spread out before me. It has been a new hymn to me ever since. There is room here for only the slightest hints.

1
"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea,

2
"But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound or foam,
When that which drew from out the bound-
less deep
Turns again home.

3
"Twilight and evening bell
And after that the dark,
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I at last embark.

4
"For though from out the bourne of time and
space
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have Crossed the Bar."

The sunset, the most beautiful scene on earth, the type of the close of his life.
Evening star, the sign of the bright dawn of the heavenly day on the morrow.
One clear call for me. God's call to his eternal home.
The beckoning of little hands.
No moaning of the bar, across the bay at low tide causing rough water and noise. The pain and groans of the sick.
Put out to sea, on the way to the port of heaven.

Tide . . . asleep. High tide and peaceful winds.
Too full for sound. No weeping, no sadness, no agony of the sufferer. But peaceful as one goes to sleep, to awake in the morning.
Turns again home. The soul from God returns to God.

Twilight, the weakness and dimness of age. (See Eccl. 12.)
And evening bell, tolling the hour for sleep; Good night. Or it may refer to the bell that says the ship is about to sail. As Paul says "the time of my departure is at hand." The voyage begins.
After that the dark. Nothing can be seen: the veil hides the departing soul.
No sadness of farewell. For he is going home, to heaven and God and friends that have gone before; the ten thousand times ten thousand, singing songs of triumph.

I hope to see my Pilot face to face. A pilot is one who guides the vessel from the port and into the port. He knows every turn of the channel, every rock to be avoided, every lighthouse and landmark.
The Pilot, in Tennyson's poem is Christ in heaven, but always with us. As the Son of God, coming from heaven he is a perfect guide. "who has never lost a soul that has put its trust in him."

VI. *The Nation in the Storm.* So long as our nation is Christian, so long as its aim is the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven, so long will our nation survive the storms of the future as it has of the past.

Read Longfellow's "Building of the Ship."

"Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O UNION, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!"
* * * * *

"In spite of rock and tempest roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee — are all with thee!"

II. **THE DEMONIC OF GADARA.** JESUS REBUKES THE DEMONS AND GIVES THE MAN PEACE, 5:1-20. After the stilling of the tempest Jesus continued his voyage and early the next morning when he landed on the eastern shore immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. The Lord seems to have crossed the Lake, not only to give his disciples a new vision of his power, but also to do this one work on land and return.

They had come to the country of the Gadarenes. The three names used to describe the country in the different Gospels and versions are explained under *Place*, page 76. The whole region lying east of the lake of Galilee.

The Man Possessed with Demons, who met Jesus as he came out of the boat, was as nearly a wreck as the disciples' boat was when they awakened the Master in the storm. He lived among the tombs, natural or artificial caves cut in the wild mountain sides. He was exceeding fierce (Matt.); no man could bind him, no, not with chains, for he rent the chains in sunder and broke the fetters in pieces, and no man had strength to tame him. He wore no clothes, but always night and day he was crying out and cutting himself with stones. The demons in him were legion "for we are many."

Never can we imagine a man that had more need of Jesus' mighty power to save him from being a total wreck, body and soul.

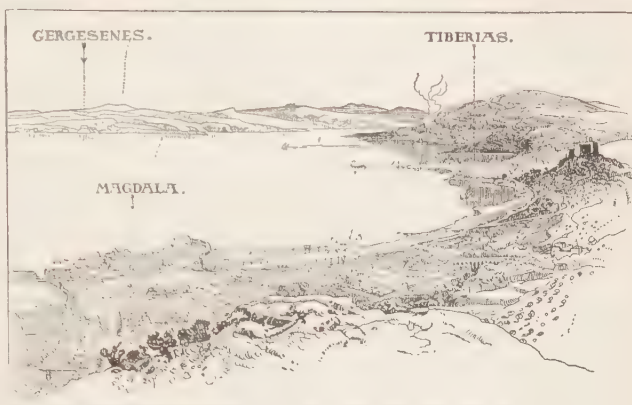
"Master, the tempest is raging,
The billows are tossing high,

The sky is o'ershadowed with blackness,
No shelter or hope is nigh."

Only Jesus could say for him as for a storm-tossed bark, to winds and waves *Peace, be still*; and give him the peace of relief from his tormentors, of physical and mental

health, of companionship with his fellow-men, of all that the love of God can give him.

But this is not all. Persons may be insane, even violently insane, without being guilty or blameworthy. Insanity is a disease of the brain, and is treated as a disease ; and needs pity and kind treatment, and the best of care. "But it is regarded as almost certain that this kind of possession comes through various progressive degrees of guilt and sensual abandonment. Lavish sin, and especially indulgence in sensual lusts, superinducing, as it often would, a weakness in the nervous system, which is the especial bond between body and soul, may have laid open these unhappy ones to the fearful incursions of the powers of darkness. The objection is frequently urged, How comes it that this malady is not now among us? But we cannot tell in how many cases of insanity the malady may not even now be traced to direct demoniacal possession." — *Alford.*



Pictorial Map of the Southern End of the Sea of Galilee,
from the Land of Gennesaret.

Mark calls them "unclean spirits." Demons are called unclean because they are impure, unholy, defiling, and produce such effects both in the body and the spirit of those whom they possess. The outward filth was a type of the moral defilement. The devil's characteristic work is to ruin both body and soul. It never occurs but in a morally disordered person, and by yielding of the will to evil. The soul is a castle which Satan cannot enter without permission from within. God's obedient children are absolutely safe.

John Bunyan in his *Capture of Mansoul*, by the powers of evil points out that the castle of Mansoul can never be taken except by some traitor within.

"I am Master of my soul."

"I am heir, and this my kingdom,
Shall the royal voice be mute?
Hold the sceptre, human soul,
And rule the province of the brute."

The poor demoniac needed Christ's *Peace, be Still*, the storm in his soul was far more terrible than the waves and winds of the lake. He needed the Peace of forgiven sin, the Peace of a new heart and a new life.

And Jesus brought to him both kinds of Peace.

6. When he saw Jesus from afar. Though he met Jesus immediately on His landing, the maniac's keen eyes had seen the approaching ship far off, and he had run down from the hills. And worshipped him by bowing his head to the ground.

"Within this miserable being there was a double consciousness ; the beast-man and the God-man. It is the fact of a possible double or multiple personality, which makes Stevenson's story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde a scientific possibility." — *From John Watson.*

Jesus immediately said to the unclean spirit, *Come out of the man* (v. 8).

The unclean spirit within the man cried out with a loud voice, *What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God ? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not.*

Jesus asked the unclean spirit, *What is thy name ?*

The unclean spirit in the man replied, *My name is Legion ; for we are many*, v. 9.

15. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

16. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

17. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18. And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

Jesus "draws the man into a conversation, asking as a skilful physician would, his name, seeking to disentangle his human personality from the complex consciousness." — *Prof. Laidlaw*.

The unclean legion entreated Jesus that he would not send them away out of the country (Mk.) nor command them to depart into the abyss (Luke, Am. R., "the bottomless pit"). — *Century Bible*.

Near by was a herd of 2000 swine, and the demons asked Jesus, *Send us away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go* (Matt.), "not necessarily more than Begone. Mark's *He gave them leave* was simply that he did not forbid them. There soon followed the mad downrush of the herd over the precipice into the lake, and they perished in the waters. 'For only thereby could it be conclusively shown that the devils had left the demoniac.'" — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

The News Quickly Spread. The herders hastened to the city of Gersa near by. Undoubtedly they went to their masters, to free themselves from blame for the loss of the swine.

The Story as told by Christmas Evans, the great Welsh preacher, who used this miracle as the basis of a remarkable sermon which was the favorite of Dwight L. Moody. After describing the vigorous efforts of the swineherds, Evans proceeds: "Never was there such a running, and whipping, and hallooing; but down go the hogs before they are aware of it. One of them said, 'They are all gone.' 'No, sure, not all gone into the sea!' 'Yes, every one of them, the black hog and all. They are all drowned! The devil is in them! What shall we do now? What shall we say to the owners?' 'What can we say?' said another, 'we must tell the truth — that is all about it. We did our best — all that was in our power. What could any man do more?'"

"So they went on their way to the city to tell the masters what had happened. 'John, where are you going?' exclaimed one of the masters. 'Sir, did you know the demoniac that was among the tombs there?' 'Demoniac among the tombs? Where did you leave the hogs?' 'That madman, sir —' 'Madman! Why do you come home without the hogs?' 'That wild and furious man, sir, that mistress was afraid of so much —' 'Why, John, I ask you a plain and simple question — why don't you answer me? Where are the hogs?' 'That man who was possessed with the devils, sir —' 'Why, sure enough, you are crazy! You look wild! Tell me your story, if you can, let it be what it may.' 'Jesus Christ, sir, has cast the unclean spirits out of the demoniac; they are gone into the swine; and they are all drowned in the sea; for I saw the tail of the last one!'"

The people went out to see. And this was what they saw. — Jesus, and near him, "sitting at his feet" (Luke), the man that had been possessed with the demons, clothed and in his right mind. The whole story of the maniac and the swine was pictured out to them, and they were afraid. "This is the only case in our Lord's ministry in which his miracles operated against him in this way." — *Int. Crit. Com.* They were afraid of the tremendous, mysterious power which Jesus had shown, and doubtless their consciences gave them an uneasy sense of the evil that was in them also, needing to be cast out.

17. And they, all the people (Luke), began to pray him (Am. R. "beseech him") to depart out of their coasts (Am. R. "from their borders"). The men who are making money by selling the immoral books which are poisoning the souls of boys and girls; by child labor; by owning slums that breed disease and sin; by graft; by gambling; by ruining competitors; by any kind of dishonesty; desire that Jesus should depart and let them alone.

Temperance Application. This legion of demons may represent intemperance. It is manifold in its nature and work. It works infinite injury to men, ruining health

19. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

and happiness, clothing men in rags, driving them from respectable society, inciting to crime, taking away the reason, rendering impure and unclean in body and soul. And yet the owners of saloons and those who very lately have sent great ships loaded with rum to Africa, do not want to have their business interfered with. by Jesus, by churches, by every best element in our country. They are willing to ruin souls, to injure their nation, to transform men into demons, in order to make money for themselves.

Rev. Anna H. Shaw's experience as told in that fascinating book, *Story of a Pioneer*. In a certain parish where she was pastor she protested from the pulpit against "a small drinking and gambling saloon which was rapidly demoralizing our boys, for the resort was constantly filled with boys of all ages." A committee in league with the popular owner, advised her to "let that village alone," and "confine her criticisms to saloons in Boston." She continued to preach against the gambling saloon, till the feeling was so intense that she offered her resignation. Then her friends rallied, and the resort was suppressed.

The Redeemed Man Sent as a Missionary, vs. 18-20. As Jesus was entering the boat to return to Capernaum, the restored demoniac naturally desired to go with Him who had done so much for him. But Jesus did not permit him, for there was work for him to do in his own country that no one else could do as well. He was a specimen of Jesus' work. **Go home to thy friends.** We owe our first duty to home and friends. These persons knew the man, and better than any one else could understand the wonderful change in him. There could be no question there of the fact of the change. Moreover, Jesus here showed His compassion on these people who rejected Him, and left a witness among them, who might influence some to believe, and to seek Jesus. To be a missionary for Christ, in the region where he was so well known and so long dreaded, was a far nobler calling than to follow Him where nobody had ever known about him.

Tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee. His greatest power for good was in testifying to the facts, in bearing witness to the love and power of Jesus, as he had felt them. We can do little effective work in preaching the Gospel, except so far as we have experienced it.

Began to publish in Decapolis, i.e. the region of *The Ten Cities*. The large region southeast of the Sea of Galilee and east of the Jordan, of which Gadara was a portion.

LESSON X. — March 10.

JESUS RESTORING LIFE AND HEALTH. — Mark 5:21-43.

PRINT Mark 5:21-43.

(May be used with Missionary Applications)

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases.* — MATT. 8:17.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 103:1-14.

Additional Material for Teachers: Luke 7:11-16; 17:11-19; John 5:1-9; 11:1-46; 10:7-18.

Primary Topic: Jesus Restoring a Little Girl to Life.

Memory Verse: Bless Jehovah, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits. — Ps. 103:2.

Intermediate Topic: Jesus the Giver of Life.

Memory Verse: John 10:10.

Additional Material: Acts 3:1-11; 9:32-41.

Senior and Adult Topic: Medical Missions.

THE TEACHER'S INTRODUCTION

OF THE SUBJECT TO THE CLASS.

Those who used to hear Mr. Joseph Cook in his Monday noon lectures in Boston, will recall how he always began with some striking remark that attracted the attention of every one. It is an effective method for the teacher.

Suppose he begins by asking, *Why Jesus spent so much time in working miracles of healing on the bodies of people?*

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn A.D. 28, soon after the curing of the demoniac.

Place. — Capernaum.

LEARN BY HEART.

Matt. 9: 35; 28: 19, 20.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Jairus, — the ruler of a synagogue, — what could induce him to appeal to Jesus?

What reasons had he for faith that Jesus could restore his only daughter?

How would the incident of the healing on the way to Jairus' house increase his faith?

The report that the girl was dead, and Jesus' encouragement, — Only believe.

Why did Jesus require faith in cases of healing?

The scene in the house when Jesus arrived. Matt. 9: 23; Mk. 5: 38.

What five persons were permitted to enter the sick-room, and why these?

What are the spiritual benefits of miracles of healing?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Story of Jairus and His Young Daughter.

I. IN SEVEN SCENES.

II. THE MESSAGE OF THE TWO MIRACLES TO OUR MODERN LIFE.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. *Works on the Miracles* by Trench, Lang, Laidlaw, Taylor, Spurgeon. *Christ's Acted Parables*, a study of miracles by Dr. N. S. Burton. Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Life*, "Funerals and Mourning in the East." Thomson's *Land and the Book*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

N. P. Willis' *Poems*, "The Daughter of Jairus." Longfellow's *Poems*, "Resignation." Susan Coolidge's *Poems*, "Talitha Cumi." J. R. Miller's *Week-day Religion*, "The Ministry of Sorrow" and "Wayside Ministries." His *Making the Most of Life*, "Getting Christ's Touch," has several good illustrations.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Works on art describe many pictures of the raising of Jairus' daughter, by Veronese, Hofmann,* Overbeck, Vriendt, Richter,* Bida, Doré, Keller,* La Fossé,* Tissot, etc.

21. And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

22. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

THE STORY OF JAIRUS AND HIS YOUNG DAUGHTER.

SCENE I. v. 21. Jesus was returning from Gerasa on the eastern coast of the Sea of Galilee, where he had left the restored and redeemed demoniac to tell his story throughout that region.

The multitude from Capernaum had rushed down to the shore in the early morning at the first sight of the boat returning with Jesus and his disciples, and "as soon as he had landed it swarmed down upon him" (*Swete*), "and they gathered about him and welcomed him" (*Burton*).

"The boat that bore the Master had crossed the silver sea,
And all along the mountain paths of rugged Galilee
Were sounds of voices eager-pitched, was throng of hurrying feet,
For then, as now, were weary hearts, and Jesus' words were sweet."

SCENE II. vs. 22, 23. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name. One of the elders, or presiding officers elected to have charge of all synagogue affairs. They formed the local tribunal, they convened the assembly, preserved order, invited readers and speakers, managed the schools connected with the synagogue. Jairus must, therefore, have been one of the more prominent Jews of the city.

23. And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

He rushed among the crowds, pushing his way till in his eagerness he found Jesus, and fell at his feet, dropping upon his knees, and bringing his forehead to the ground, the Oriental method of reverence and worship. "The prostration is the more remarkable as that of a dignitary in the presence of a crowd. His dignity was forgotten in the presence of a great sorrow; he recognized his inferiority to the Prophet who had the power to heal." — *Prof. Swele*.

Jairus had doubtless seen and heard much of Jesus, for many notable miracles had been wrought in Capernaum. He had very good reason to be convinced of His power, and accordingly expresses unhesitating faith, so far as the words of his prayer go. Yet we never read before this that Jairus was a disciple. Never, till the hand of death seemed laid on his daughter, had the father yielded full homage to Christ. "For sorrow and death are strong messengers, and men will listen to them who have shut their ear to all others."

Thus bowed down, Jairus besought him greatly, because of the urgency of the case. My little daughter lieth at the point of death. Matthew reports it — "My daughter is even now dead," as if he had said, She was dying when I left home; I fear she is dead by this time. Come and lay thy hands on her, as the means of communicating His divine power. Even if Jesus could heal without His presence, as in the case of the centurion's servant, it was comforting to have Jesus in the family and in the presence of the dying girl. Moreover, he knew that in most cases Jesus came into personal contact with those He healed.

SCENE III. v. 24. We now see Jesus and Jairus pressing their way as urgently as possible toward the house where the dying girl lay. "After Him went the twelve (Matt.), and a vast crowd eager to see another wonder. The crowd pressed around Him, leaving Him scarce space to move (Mk.) or even to breathe." — *Swele*. There was intense interest in every case of healing, both because they at any time might need his help, and because it made it more clear that a prophet had come from God.

SCENE IV. vs. 25-34. In the midst of the urgent pressure to reach the house of Jairus before his daughter died, there came a sudden interruption.

A woman with an incurable disease, but who was able to walk, was among the throng that followed Jesus. She had "suffered many things of many physicians," and when one recalls the kind of physicians and their methods of cure in those days, we do not wonder that she suffered, and that they failed to cure her, although she "spent all that she had" in the vain endeavor.

"Tradition makes her a resident not of Capernaum, but of Paneas, or Caesarea Philippi (in the far north of Palestine) who had wandered to Galilee, seeking relief from her trouble.

"This woman put herself in His way; . . . and thus proved the strength of her faith; for she had most likely never seen Him before, and had never heard Him speak, had never beheld one of His miracles. . . . She had somehow gathered a



Bida.

A Woman Healed by Touching the Garment of Jesus.

35. While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead : why troublest thou the Master any further ?

36. As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

strong persuasion of His ability, such that she said to her neighbors, to herself, or to both, if I may touch but His clothes I shall be whole." — *Laidlaw on the Miracle*. This she said after she had heard of Jesus, doubtless from persons in the crowd who had seen many of His miracles.

Now was her opportunity. The healer was near, and on the way to cure another person. "For each one of them there was the infinite longing of His love, the infinite desire of His compassion, the infinite willingness of His help." — *Archbishop Lang*.

The woman timidly "came in the crowd behind and touched his garment, the border or hem, or one of the blue and white tassels that hung from its corners, one corner of the garment being thrown over his shoulder behind him," so that she did not have to stoop to touch it.

It was the Touch of Faith, and she was immediately healed of that plague.

Jesus . . . turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes ? (Am. R. "Who touched me ?") The disciples were surprised that with the multitude thronging close to him he should ask such a question ; but Jesus knew that it was no ordinary touch, for in that touch virtue, power to heal, had gone out of him (Am. R. "Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth"). It was a costly thing to heal any one. Real sympathy (= suffering with another) is a drain on any one's powers. The woman came to Jesus, "and trembling . . . fell down before him and made her confession before all the people (Luke). But it was richly rewarded. Daughter, He said, be of good cheer (Matt. A. V.) thy faith hath made thee whole ; go in peace. No one in all the Gospel story was ever addressed by Him with this tender appellation, but herself." — *Laidlaw*.

Christ called the woman to him in order to complete the spiritual blessing of her cure.

"The healing of the seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain ;
We touch him in life's throng and press
And we are whole again."

— *Whittier*.

It was necessary also to aid the faith of Jairus in this trying delay, and especially in view of the sad news of his daughter's death that immediately followed.

The Faith Touch and the World Touch. The crowd touched Jesus and received no healing influence. The woman touched him in faith and was made whole. Multitudes in Galilee never saw Jesus as he really was. A few by faith "beheld his glory, full of grace and truth." Arthur Helps compares some men to birds on a telegraph wire, who are utterly unconscious of the messages of sorrow and joy, of business and friendship, — messages sometimes affecting whole nations, — which are passing right under their feet. It needs the battery and connecting instruments in order to read what passes on the wire.

SCENE V. vs. 35-37. Just as they are ready to go on their way messengers come from the ruler's house telling Jairus, Thy daughter is dead : why troublest thou the Master any further ? This seemed to settle the question, for hitherto only one instance of raising the dead, so far as we know, had occurred, and that not in the Lake district. (That of the widow's son, Luke 7 : 11-16.) As soon as Jesus heard the word. Am. R. "But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken." "Jesus catches the words as they are uttered, and speaks before Jairus has time for a hopeless or unbelieving thought, Be not afraid, only believe. At this point Jesus separates himself from the crowd and from most of his disciples, and with Jairus, and Peter, James, and John, draws near to the house."

SCENE VI. vs. 38-40. The Oriental funeral scene at the ruler's house presented a great contrast with all that is familiar to us. As they approached the house Jesus heard "piercing shrieks, and loud, high, prolonged quavering wails of mourning. At the very moment of death, one of these wild shrieks, by whoever is nearest the dead,

38. And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40. And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

42. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

announces the fact of the death. This cry is taken up and repeated by friends of the family near and far. Every sympathizing woman friend who hurries to share the mourning over the dead announces her approach to the sorrow-stricken home by the conventional shriek, and then adds her voice to the mourning chorus. . . .

"The Oriental death-cry is indescribable in its peculiar tones, and in its unique impressiveness. . . . I assure you that if its sound were once to come into your ears, its echoes would be a life long memory with you." — *H. C. Trumbull's Studies in Oriental Social Life.*

When Jesus had entered the house he said to the mourners, **Why make ye this ado?** (Am. R. "tumult"). **The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.** That he meant this figuratively (Comp. John 11: 11-14; 1 Cor. 15: 6, 51; 1 Thes. 4: 13) is scarcely to be doubted from Luke 8: 49, 52, esp. 55, and from the whole spirit of the narrative. It was natural that he should so speak here, also, because he proposed to restore her immediately to life. "To speak of death as a sleep is an image common, I suppose, to all languages and nations." Death is a sleep, because there is an awakening on the other side. The body decays, but the soul is immortal. See 1 Cor. 15: 35-38.

40. **And they laughed him to scorn.** They were so sure that the girl was really dead; and they did not perceive that Jesus was speaking figuratively from the knowledge of what he intended to do. This is given as an unquestionable proof of the reality of the miracle.

SCENE VII. vs. 41-43. Jesus immediately sent all mourning friends, and the hired mourners, out of the room, for their presence was a hindrance to the spiritual good of the family; and then Jairus, the girl's mother, and the three disciples, all went with Jesus into the room where the child was lying.

The Restoration to Life.

41. **He took the damsel** (Am. R. "the child") **by the hand.** Jesus usually touched those he healed, in order to express his personal sympathy, and to show that the power came from him. **And said to her, Talitha cumi,** the Aramaic Syriac, the form of Hebrew then used by the common people, meaning **Damsel, arise.**

42. **And straightway the damsel arose, and walked,** showing the completeness of the cure, without a long period of convalescence; shown also by his commanding them to give her something to eat.

And they, especially her parents (Luke), were astonished with a great astonishment.



From a photograph by A. Keller.
The Raising of Jairus' Daughter.

43. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

43. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it, not that they should never tell; but not while the crowds around were excited, and would have insisted on his raising from the dead, without the spiritual receptiveness which would have made the act of any value.

THE MESSAGE OF THESE MIRACLES TO OUR MODERN LIFE

The Miracles of the Bible are just the kind of things Jesus would have done if he were able. They were all done to help people who were in need. Not one was done for himself. Not one was meaningless. And every miracle was far more than the healing of disease, — it was also a miracle in the soul of the person healed, and of vastly greater blessing and importance to him.

One of those capital short articles in the *Youth's Companion* discussing the reality of miracles, closes with this paragraph, —

"But I am infinitely more concerned about another phase of His power. Whether or not He fed five thousand people on the mountainside, I *know* He has fed the souls of millions since. Whether or not He calmed that storm on the Sea of Galilee, I *know* He has calmed storms of passion and hatred and fear in the souls of Christendom from that time until now. Whether or not He brought Lazarus out of the tomb, I *know* He has taken the souls of men in whom truth and honor and sobriety and purity had died, and He has brought new life and power and goodness to birth in those souls. After all, Bob, we have ourselves seen the *greatest* 'miracle' that can be wrought!"

The Resurrection and the Life. (1) Jesus here, and in the other restorations of the dead to life, gives us examples of the soul's existence after the death of the body, and apart from the body. He proved that the soul does not die with the body by facts, not merely assertions. (2) These miracles prepare us to accept the fact of his resurrection, on which depends the truth of the Gospel and the proof of his Messiahship. If Jesus can raise others from the dead, there is nothing incredible in his own resurrection, and the immortal life it proves. (3) Jesus is still the resurrection and the life. Our dear ones are raised again by him to a life as much more glorious than the life here, as a plant in full bloom is more glorious than the seed from which it sprung.

The Sleeping Child. Mrs. Browning has a poem on a sleeping child tired out with playing, and slumbering on the floor, and compares it to her own sleep in death.

"Differing in this that I sleeping shall be colder,
And in waking presently, brighter to behold.
Say not good night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me good morning."

The younger classes may well learn by heart the story of this little girl restored to life. Most of you have a brother or sister, or a friend who has been taken up to heaven where Jesus loves them as he loved them here. Of such a one Longfellow sings:

"She is not dead, — the child of our affection, —
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

"Day after day we think of what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair."

Do you ever think of them in this way? Are you trying to be as good as they, and to keep pace with them in the school of Christ, here, as they there?

Note the Faith of Jairus. "Faith is accepting God's revelation and acting as if it were true. Faith, however simple, is not proved to be real, until it ventures into act." — *Arbp. Cosmo G. Lang.*

Jairus was now in Christ's Training School of Faith. (1) He had some faith, founded on what he had seen and heard.

(2) He had need of more faith, if he was to become a disciple of Jesus. For it was a very hard thing for a respected leader of the Jews to go contrary to the whole synagogue, and to stand up alone against the great body of his associates and friends, the influential Jews. He needed the answer to the prayer which the disciples once uttered, Lord increase our faith.

(3) His faith was increased by Jesus' willingness to help.

(4) By the delay on the route to his home, when Jesus stopped to heal another he learned that "Delays are not denials" but "doors to larger blessings."

(5) The living child in his home was a perpetual reminder of what Jesus had done, and what he was.

(6) It is probable that Jairus was not a disciple, at least openly, before the restoration of his child, but that henceforth he was a changed man, a miracle of transforming grace.

Medical Missions, and Missionary Schools. As we look back upon the Foreign Missionary work begun in this country more than a hundred years ago, it is interesting to notice the great changes that have been made toward a broader method more completely like the method pursued by Jesus, which, found in Isaiah 61, he declared was being fulfilled in his mission.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor;
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

I. The first duty of all was to preach and proclaim in every possible way the good tidings of the coming of Jesus the Christ to save and to bless (John 3:16). Emphasized in the first and repeated in the last line of the message, and in the preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus.

This was the first and highest duty of the missionaries, and they did it faithfully and well.

II. The next essential was that there should appear plainly the fruits of the new religion. There were few converts at first, and the first fruits were largely in the missionaries themselves, and their families,—their character, noble life, civilization, culture, etc.

III. Then came the era of schools and colleges and the results were visible everywhere in the young men and women; a great and marvellous testimony to Christianity.

IV. Close with the schools came the medical missions and hospitals, and all the known means of healing diseases and saving life, bringing the same kind of proofs of the value of the religion of Jesus that he himself did in his miraculous healings of all manner of diseases when on earth. As he promised his disciples (John 14:12), he is healing more sick, opening more blind eyes, binding up more broken-hearted than he did in Palestine, nearly 1900 years ago.

With these proofs of what Christ is doing in heathen lands, goes the preaching of the Gospel more earnestly than ever. As Jesus made his healing of disease the means of converting the souls of those who were healed, so modern medical missions are turning to Christ those who have received bodily cures.

The Great Need. "Imagine, if you can, the condition of a country in which there are no doctors, where the healing art is only practiced by a few quacks, who rely more on charms than on physic for their cures. Such is now, and such was Palestine in our Lord's day. There, until the medical missionaries were sent by several English societies, there was not a physician in the land, and even now there are very few. In such a country as this, with sick and crippled in every village, picture the eager excitement when the news spreads that there is a good physician arrived in town; that he has healed a fierce demoniac by a word, and a great fever by a touch."—*H. D. Tristram, DD., LLD., in Sunday School Times.*

The Women's Hospitals have a part no less important than that of the women's schools. In fact the whole medical branch of missionary service is, in the opinion of those who are best informed, an essential factor in the presentation of Christianity to the Chinese. China is not more in need of intellectual enlightenment than she is of the sort of education which a hospital offers. Better sanitation, a knowledge of the principles of sanitation, and a sane and scientific medical practice, are among the things which China must achieve.

In addition to its social and scientific services, the missionary hospital has no superior as an interpreter of essential Christianity. Many believe that as an evangelistic agency it has no equal.

That the medical missionaries do interpret Jesus Christ to the Chinese is seen in the devotion which they inspire. — *From The King's Highway*, 1915. *The 15th in the United Study Series of the Women's Boards of Foreign Missions.*

LESSON XI. — March 17.

JESUS SENDING FORTH THE TWELVE. — Mark 6:1-31.

PRINT Mark 6:7-13, 30.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Freely ye received, freely give.* — MATT. 10:8.

Devotional Reading: Rom. 10:13-15; Isa. 40:3-9.

Additional Material for Teachers: Matt. 28:16-20; Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-4; 16:9, 10.

Primary Topic: Jesus Feeding the Hungry.

Lesson Material: Mark 6:7-13; 30-44.

Memory Verse: Give ye them to eat. — Mark 6:37.

Junior Memory Verse: Isa. 52:7.

Intermediate Topic: Messengers of Christ.

Memory Verses: Matt. 28:18-20.

Additional Material: Acts 1:6-8.

Senior and Adult Topic: The Power of the Gospel of Christ.

Additional Material: Matt. 28:16-20; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:17-31.

THE TEACHER'S INTRODUCTION

OF TO-DAY'S LESSON TO HIS CLASS, may well follow the plan of the Great Teacher in His training of His Senior Class of Twelve, as we shall see as we proceed.

Students in Technology classes after they have mastered the principles of any study, are often taken by their professor to some factory where they can see the principles applied, the results tested and proved.

Something like this will be revealed in the process of our studies to-day.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Twelve were sent on their Home Missionary tour the last of Feb. or early in March, A.D. 29.

They returned just before the time that Herod slew John the Baptist in his castle Machærus.

Place. — The Twelve were sent to preach and heal throughout Galilee.

Jesus Himself also went forth through Galilee, preaching and teaching.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

How long had Jesus been preaching and working in Galilee?

Would this account for the need of more laborers?

The effect upon laborers in Christ's vineyard of their praying for more laborers.

What two kinds of work were these Home Missionaries to do?

How do these two kinds of work mutually aid one another?

Why were the disciples to preach, at this time, only in Galilee? (Matt. 10:5, 6.)

Why were they as preachers to go about like ordinary men?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Home Missionary Work in Galilee, by the Twelve.

I. CHRIST'S TRAINING SCHOOL FOR THE TWELVE.

II. A NEW DEPARTURE IN THE TRAINING OF THE TWELVE.

THEIR FIRST EXPERIENCE IN TOURING ALONE. Mk. 6:7; Matt. 9:36-10:1.

III. THE HOME MISSIONARIES AT WORK, Mk. 6:8-13; Matt. 10.

IV. THE GOSPEL WORK FOR TO-DAY.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

For books on the characters of the Twelve, see Lesson VI of this Quarter. *The Apostles as Everyday Men*, by Dr. R. Ellis Thompson.

On the instructions given, Professor Bruce's *Training of the Twelve*, especially chap. 8. *The Gospel for An Age of Doubt*, by Dr. van Dyke, on "Service." See also Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*, Part II., p. 114, for an illustration on the best teachers, — all four in One.

On the results, v. 30, see *The Growth of the Kingdom*, by Sidney and Edward Gulick, which is full of facts and statistics, the latest and best book on the subject. (50¢, Pilgrim Press.)

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

On *Freely Received, Freely Give*, see *The Signet Ring*.

On the cup of cold water, see Mrs. Emma Lent's *Poem*, "The Master is

Coming." Lowell's *Poems*, "Vision of Sir Launfal." Longfellow's *Poems*, "The Legend Beautiful." The poem "Wrought into Gold." A poem in Foster's *Cyc. of Poet. Illustrations*, No. 905, on doing good. Hood's *Poems*, "The Lady's Dream."

THE LESSON IN ART.

Dürer's* *St. John and St. Peter*. Thorwaldsen's *Statue of St. Peter*. *Peter* by Bartolommeo.* *St. Philip and St.*

James, Hans Memling. *St. John*, Raphael, Domenichino,* Dolci.* *Heads of the Apostles* after original drawings by Da Vinci.

The Twelve Apostles Depart, Michael Wohlgemuth. *Peace be to this House*, Dobson.*

Da Vinci's* *Last Supper* has pictures of all the Apostles.

LEARN BY HEART.

Matt. 10 : 7, 8; Mark 6 : 7.

The Home Missionaries at Work. The Mission of the Twelve. Their First Experiences of Working Alone. A Test.

I. THE TRAINING SCHOOL OF CHRIST FOR THE TWELVE. It is very interesting and profitable to study the methods by which Jesus trained the Twelve after he had set them apart from the great body of his disciples; and to apply the same general principles to ourselves, our Churches, and our Sunday Schools.

These Twelve were set apart about the middle of his public ministry, in the mid-summer of A.D. 28, to be with him the rest of his life. Gradually he had been selecting them from the numbers of his true disciples, testing them, and choosing those who had in them the largest possibilities, however undeveloped that may have been at first.

Note that these were originally ordinary men. "Suppose," says Dr. R. E. Thompson, "that our Lord had made up his first Church out of rare and selected natures, of men who never would have doubted what he said, or flinched from peril or acted on the lower motives, how much we would have lost. We should have felt that these were exceptional men, that they did not feel our difficulties or need the help we do in our temptations. We would have said that it was a beautiful story, full of religious poetry, but unfitted to take hold of people like us."

How Jesus Transformed Them. We first study the ways by which Jesus transformed the Twelve from ordinary, imperfect, unlearned, incomplete men, into apostles who became (together with Paul) the most influential instruments of spreading the Gospel down the ages.

1. It is worth while to note the great variety of character in these apostles, to meet the great variety of persons with whom they must deal.

2. The personality of Jesus, the spiritual atmosphere in which he lived was doubtless the strongest influence affecting the disciples. President Hadley says: "All the moral precepts which are taught even by the great head-masters . . . are of little consequence compared with the personality of those teachers themselves." So Paul states in 2 Cor. 3 : 18: "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

3. Jesus taught the twelve by his own perfect and continual example. An ideal and goal was ever before them.

4. By his teachings to themselves directly, and those which they heard him teach and preach to others.

5. As a natural result of this companionship, there arose in them an intense love, devotion, admiration, loyalty to Jesus.

6. It is especially noticeable how wonderfully gentle and long-suffering he was to these imperfect men, and how little fault he found with them. Like the Good Physician he came to cure, to overcome with good.

Illustration. In his *Fors Clavigera*, Ruskin quotes from a Greek author the account of the education of the princes of ancient Persia. Their education begins when a boy is seven years old, in an active out-of-door life, in things that require strength and courage, as managing a horse. At 14 they give him the masters they call the Kingly Child-Guiders. These are four, chosen out of the best of all the Persians, —

The Wisest man, who teaches the service of God, and the duties that belong to a king.

The Justest man, who teaches him to speak truth all his life.

The most Temperate, who teaches him not to be conquered by even so much as a single one of the pleasures, and verily a king, master of all things within himself, not a slave to them.

The Bravest teaches him to be dreadless of all things as knowing that whenever he fears he is a slave.

But Jesus our Teacher embodies more than all four together, — far more, far better, far wiser. And every wise boy and girl or young man or woman seeks first to learn what Jesus teaches, and goes to Him for wisdom and strength to obey.

The *Twelve Disciples* belonged to the Senior Class in Christ's Training School.

II. A NEW DEPARTURE IN THE TRAINING, Mark 6: 7; Matt. 9: 36-10: 1.

(Mark here is so condensed that it is wise to use Matthew in connection with it.)

The training of the Twelve, such as we have seen above, lasted about six months from Midsummer, A.D. 28 to March A.D. 29. In the meantime the work had grown beyond the power of the little company united together, to accomplish. For the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

"What means this eager, anxious throng,
Which moves with busy haste along—
These wondrous gatherings day by day

What means this strange commotion, pray? —
In accents hushed the throng reply:
'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.'

In a recent story by Dr. Herbert Jump, a young minister in a small parish found several variations of this truth hindering his work, —

"The Harvest truly is plenteous,"
But the spectators are many.

"The Harvest truly is plenteous,"
But the cowards are many.

"The Harvest truly is plenteous,"
But faultfinders are many.

"The Harvest truly is plenteous,"
And we will go right on gathering it.

But I will say that the churches of Christ were never before so busy in gathering in the harvest as to-day. And yet there is the greatest need that all Christians should pray the Lord of the harvest that he send forth laborers into his harvest, and every one should answer his own prayer.

Jesus therefore makes a certain change in method. Hitherto he and his disciples had gone on their tours together. Now for a time Jesus goes alone (Matt. 11: 1), and he sends his disciples two by two, making six companies besides himself, on a tour throughout Galilee.

The Testing Time. There was another reason besides the abundant harvest waiting for the reapers. The Twelve needed testing as to what they could do without the presence of Jesus. Had they learned their lessons so well that they could put them in practice by themselves, and thus gain confidence?

For it would not be long before they would be without his visible presence. Having ascended to heaven, he was with them in reality, still their Lord and Saviour; and with the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, they became transformed men, as a plant in the spring sun bursts into bloom.

"I asked the roses as they grew
Richer and lovelier in their hue,

What made their tints so rich and bright?
They answered, 'Looking toward the light.'

III. THE HOME MISSIONARIES AT WORK. FIRST. THEIR FIELD OF WORK, Matt. 10: 5, 6. Go not into the way of the Gentiles. Do not take any road that leads to the surrounding nations, as for instance the cities of Tyre and Sidon. City of the Samaritans. Though nearer than the Gentiles. The time had not come for this more distant work, but it would come later.

6. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. These belonged to the flock of God, but had wandered far away and were lost. This does not mean that they were never to go to the Gentiles. But here in Galilee was the best starting point. For (1) the Jews had a long training in the religion of the true God. (2) They had the promises of the new kingdom, and were expecting it. (3) The apostles were acquainted with the people, and as poor men could sustain themselves while working. (4) The easiest and best way to reach the Gentiles was to have a nucleus of disciples among the Jews, a central station or power house. This was Paul's habit in his missionary work. Herein lies the power of the individual church.

Practical suggestions. 1. Begin at home, make it the centre of a work extending into "the wide, wide world." Begin at home, but never end there.

2. Christians are responsible for the evangelization of their own town and country. They are under obligation to see that all, old and young, are invited to church

7. And he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8. And commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in *their* purse:

9. But *be* shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11. And whomsoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

and Sabbath school, and meetings, and directly to Christ himself. Thus can they be trained to go into all the world and preach the Gospel.

SECOND. THEY WERE ENDOWED WITH POWER, Mk. 6:7; Matt. 10:1; Luke 9:1. Jesus when he sent out his disciples to work, endowed them with power and authority (compare Luke 9:1) over unclean spirits, and over disease. That is, he both qualified them and authorized them. Such authority showed that they were disciples of Jesus, and endorsed their preaching as truth from God.

THIRD. THEY WENT FORTH TWO BY TWO, Mk. 6:7. The wisest way and the most successful. In such work for a definite purpose twice one is more than two. Each would supplement the work of the other. They would reach different classes of minds, and where one failed the other would be ready with the right word. In any doubtful case they could help each other to come to a right decision.

"So when two work together, each for each
Is quick to plan, and can the other teach;

But when alone one seeks the best to know,
His skill is weaker and his thoughts are slow."

FOURTH. THEY WERE TO GO ON THEIR MISSION AS ORDINARY MEN, v. 8. In their ordinary dress, as common travellers, and not in the peculiar prophet garb, or with any kind of ostentation, but trusting God and depending on the people whom they served for their necessary support. They were to take no gold, **no money in their purses**, literally "girdles,"

in the folds of which money was usually kept, **no scrip**, a wallet or small bag, "generally made of leather, and slung, like a satchel, over the shoulder." Mine, which came from Palestine, is the tanned skin of a small kid, the neck being the opening at the top, and the two fore-legs tied together making the handle. **Neither shoes.**

They were to wear their usual

sandals which were absolutely necessary, but not the soft shoes of brilliant colors (as always in modern Palestine) which would indicate luxury or pride. **Nor two coats**, a useless encumbrance. They were to be supported by the people because they must have the necessities of life, and it would ruin their cause to preach or work miracles for pay. **For the workman is worthy of his meat**, his living. The apostles were not to be regarded as beggars, for they earned their support; the disciples were to give freely, but those whom they helped were also to give freely. This is exactly in accord with the principles on which ministers and missionaries receive their support, and, to a large extent, teachers and doctors. They do not work for pay. But their supporters' business is to give them a comfortable living in order that they may give themselves wholly to their work. And this support should be given freely, abundantly, so that they shall not be perplexed about their living, or their families; so that they shall have the best means and aids for doing their work.

When they came to any city or village, they were first to find out the best family for their purpose, one well known for its character; one who had seen and heard Jesus; one who was worthy of being associated with them in evangelistic work.

In this home they, — that is the two who were working together, — should



Scrip, or Wallet, and Shoes.

12. And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

30. And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

remain till it was time to go to their next place of work. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it. Their very presence would be a benediction and a blessing to all who were of open heart. To be with some persons "is a liberal education." Their presence in that home was like the ark of the Lord in the house of

Obed-Edom, where the Lord blessed his house and all that pertained to it.

I recall a story of years ago in the city of New York, in which a young man advertised for a family in which his good Christian example would be sufficient compensation for his board.

I have met not a few men and women whose presence would be a benediction in my home.

The Prophet's Reward. The last verses of Matt. 10 express the blessings that came to those homes that entertained the missionaries. Those who received the disciples, received Jesus, and Him that sent him. He that received a prophet or a righteous man, because he was a prophet and a righteous man, should have the same reward. They partake of the same spirit, the same blessings. They are partners in the work, and in the joy of doing good.

FIFTH. THEIR DOUBLE WORK. 1. As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand, Matt. 10:7. Teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom.

And they preached that men should repent, Mk. 6:12. The gospel Jesus himself preached in the beginning. The King had come. He brought pardon and peace and salvation from sin, and all that characterized the kingdom. Everything good was waiting for them at their very doors. Therefore repent and believe. They preached

faith in Jesus as their Messiah, Saviour, and King. They preached **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** (John 3:16.)

"It was a house mission (not in synagogue) on which they were sent (v. 12). They were to live as guests in selected dwellings, two in one, and two in another, for a time, and their preaching would take the form of familiar conversation on what they had seen and heard Jesus do and say. They would talk by the hour; healing acts would be very occasional, one or two in a village." — *Expositor's Greek Test.*

2. They wrought the same kind of miracles that Jesus had wrought and for the same purpose. They healed the sick, cured the palsied, cast out demons. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised." Only by visible help for the body that costs us something is it possible to prove that our efforts for men's souls are sincere. Sickness and demon possession were fruits of sin, object lessons of sin. Jesus came to undo the works of the devil. By healing sick bodies through his disciples, he proved his power and willingness to heal sick souls, cleanse leprous hearts, raise the dead in sin, cast out all the devils of iniquity.

Freely ye have received, freely give. They had received from Christ his teach-



W. C. T. Dobson. From a photograph.
"Peace Be to This House."

ings, his Gospel, the great truths and their blessings, his example, and power to work, and an experience of the fruits of the Gospel. All this and more had been given them in rich abundance, more freely than they could realize at first. Therefore **freely give**, "without money and without price," out of hearts filled with the spirit of the Gospel. To take money for their miracles would ruin their work among the people, would teach selfishness instead of love, and cause them to be regarded as mere exorcists, instead of preachers of free salvation, with divine credentials. Moreover, only as we have received God's salvation freely, as a free gift, shall we be able to give freely, and preach a large, free, unearned pardon and new life. All best work of every kind is done for the work's sake, and not for the money paid for it.

IV. **THE GOSPEL WORK FOR TO-DAY** is successful only as it proceeds along these same lines. It is proclaiming the salvation of Jesus through repentance and faith, consecration, and loyalty to the Master. But the proof and power of the preaching lies in its results, — in the men made better; and in the uplifting of the people not only in spiritual things, but also into the best physical conditions, — the lessening of disease, pain, poverty, and all the evils flesh is heir to. It will be seen in better business conditions, and in all that is done to make this world a better place to live in.

Illustration. The Evangelist and the Infidel. "Last April a brother Evangelist told us that he was preaching the Gospel in the vilest section of San Francisco, known as the Barbary Coast. Among his hearers was a well-known infidel, who challenged the Evangelist to meet him in a public debate in some hall. The challenge was accepted by our brother; but he made a condition. He asked the infidel to come to the hall on the appointed evening and bring with him a drunkard, who had been made a sober man by infidelity; a fallen woman, who had become clean through hearing a lecture on infidelity, and a gambler, who had been delivered from the awful passion by accepting infidelity. Then the Evangelist said, 'I promise you when the time for the debate comes, that I will march into that hall at the head of a small army of former drunkards, harlots, and gamblers who heard the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and were saved by the power of God.' The infidel with a sneering laughter left the street-meeting."

The Modern Church was lately declared by a prominent clergyman to be declining, in spite of its increasing numbers, and increasing gifts, because so large a proportion of its work is done through organizations outside of its immediate organization, and the increasing percentage of gifts which Christian people are giving to support them.

But this idea arises from a misconception of the Church's work. The work of a university is to inspire men with a love of education, to train them in character and thinking power, to fit them for service. And the fact that its servants go forth from its walls into all the world, and through a thousand organizations of government, business, and professions, use their education and training for the good of the world, is not a sign that the university is declining, but that it is doing its work with abundant success.

So the great religious organizations, like the Y. M. C. A., Young People's Societies, Temperance organizations, Rescue Missions, hospitals, schools, colleges, and hundreds of other instruments for making the world better, healthier, happier, — all these are simply the Church at work, doing the things for which the Church is training its members, and doing them in the best way because they are done by Church federation, and are among two or three greatest instrumentalities for hastening the answer to Christ's prayer for his kingdom to come.

"Even the boys and girls can become doers as well as hearers of the Word and so prepare them to enter into personal relations with Jesus Christ."

They can find abundant opportunity of service.

"I once heard Woodrow Wilson give a terrific challenge to some young ministers. He said to them that this was really a spiritual age, and that the laymen were hungry for spiritual truth and leadership. Then turning to them with almost fierceness, he cried out, 'If you cannot lead us nearer to God, quit the ministry and go into something else.'"

"I often hear the trite remark, 'Times are changing; people do not go to church as they once did.' Times are always changing, and always will, but human nature does not. . . . It would be a blessed relief to the ministers, to say nothing of the congregations, if we could discover once for all that to preach the word of God as we read it in simplicity would bring to our own and others' hearts a new and much

longed for experience. It has been my privilege to hear such preachers as D. L. Moody, Gypsy Smith, Sylvester Horne of London, and that king of preachers, Joseph Parker, and the striking fact is that not only were they preachers of the Bible, but that Bible preaching made them what they were. If we laymen gave the same kind of attention to our business as we do to our churches, our affairs would go into the hands of a receiver in short order. — *Rev. W. A. Bartlett in The Advance.*

Wrought into Gold.

"I saw a smile, — to a poor man 'twas given,
And he was old.
The sun broke forth: I saw that smile in heaven
Wrought into gold.
Gold of such lustre was never vouchsafed to us;
It made the very light of day more luminous.

"I saw a toiling woman, sinking down,
Footsore and cold.
A soft hand covered her — the humble gown,
Wrought into gold,
Grew straightway imperishable, and will be shown
To smiling angels gathered round the judgment throne.

"Wrought into gold! We that pass down life's hours
So carelessly,
Might make the dusty way a path of flowers
If we would try,
Then every gentle deed we've done, or kind word given,
Wrought into gold would make us wondrous rich in heaven."

The Whole World to Become a Part of the Kingdom of Heaven. Who to Do It and How to Do It.

1. Be wise as serpents but harmless as doves.
2. Freely ye have received, freely give.
3. Be absolutely unselfish.
4. He that endureth to the end shall be saved.
5. The hairs of your head are all numbered.
6. Shake off the dust of your feet, — that is, have no partnership with the wicked.
7. I am come not to send peace but a sword.
8. Take up the cross and follow me.
9. He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.
10. He that receiveth you receiveth me. (From Matt. 10.)

LESSON XII. — March 24.

JESUS MINISTERING TO THE MULTITUDE. — Mark 6:32-56.

PRINT Mark 6:32-44.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* — MATT. 20:28.

Devotional Reading: John 6:35-40.

Additional Material for Teachers: Ex. 16:14-18; Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 4:16-21; Jas. 1:27; Rev. 2:17.

Primary Topic: Jesus a Helper at All Times.

Memory Verse: Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. — Mark 6:50.

Intermediate Topic: Helping the Needy.

Additional Material: Matt. 25:31-46.

Senior and Adult Topic: Christian Philanthropies.

See Additional Material for Teachers.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Prof. Melvin Kyle quotes a great homilist as saying that "no man can preach a real sermon until he first sees a vision. So then to get a vision is the

greatest thing in pulpit preparation." It is equally true of the teacher's preparation for his class.

"The imagery of the Bible is not only the most abundant source of illustrations which are always unique, fresh and of

the kind that never grow stale, but when once the imagery is fully understood, the theme of the text stands out in bold relief, and at once a graphic outline of a sermon bursts into sight. In fact, to see the imagery clearly is to *get the vision*."

Hence it is helpful to teacher and class to see such a lesson as to-day's in a vision,—or a series of scenes, or pictures.

LEARN BY HEART.

John 6:32-35.

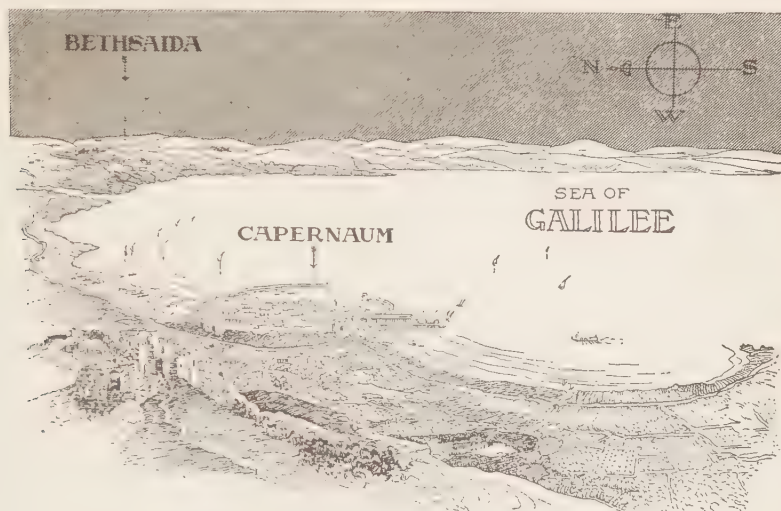
THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time.—April, A.D. 29. Just after the death of John the Baptist. The

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Scenes in the Feeding of the Five Thousand.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| SCENE I. | JESUS SUDDENLY LEAVES GALILEE FOR BETHSAIDA, Matt. 14:13; Mk. 6:30, 31. |
| SCENE II. | HIS PRIVATE SCHOOL ON THE HILLSIDE, Mk. 6:32; John 6:1. |
| SCENE III. | THE GATHERING MULTITUDES, Mk. 6:33, 34; Lu. 9:11; John 6:2, 5. |
| SCENE IV. | THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, Mk. 6:35-38; Luke 9:12, 13; John 6:5-9. |



Map of Sea of Galilee.

earlier part of the third year of Jesus' ministry. About the time of the Passover.

Place.—A plain near Bethsaida, S.E. of the town on the N.E. coast of the Sea of Galilee. Mts. back of the plain.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The story of the martyrdom of John.

Why did the death of John cause Jesus and His disciples to leave Galilee?

Whence came the great multitude?

The private school of the hillside, and the report of the twelve from their mission field.

How is Christ the Bread of Life?

In what way do we make use of this fact at the Communion seasons?

A report of Jesus' discourse on the following morning at Capernaum.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| SCENE V. | THE BOY THAT HELPED JESUS, John 6:9. |
| SCENE VI. | THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES, Mk. 6:39-42; John 6:10-12. |
| SCENE VII. | GATHERING UP THE FRAGMENTS, Mk. 6:43, 44; John 6:10-12. |
| SCENE VIII. | JESUS' SECOND BATTLE WITH THE TEMPTER, John 6:14, 15. |
| SCENE IX. | JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE, John 6:26-65. |

LIGHT FROM PICTURES.

Feeding of the Five Thousand by Doré, Murillo,* Giotto, Drouillard, Bida.*

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

This miracle is the only one recorded in each of the four Gospels, and all the commentaries discuss it. The various works on the miracles of Jesus.

On the scene of the miracle see Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, article "Bethsaida." Smith's *Hist. Geog. of the Holy Land*, pp. 457, ff. Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 374.

Spurgeon has five sermons on this miracle. Phillips Brooks, Vol. II., "How Many Loaves Have Ye?" Mark Hopkins, "That Nothing be Lost." Beecher's "Fragments of Instruction."

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Kemble's "The Boy with the Five Loaves"; "What Time the Saviour Spread His Feast."

Browning's *Poems*, "The Boy and the Angel." George Eliot's poem on Stradivarius.

Whittier's poem, "The Gift of Tritonius," shows how, by giving, the silver of life is changed to gold.

Mrs. Charles' *Poems*, "Is thy cruse of comfort failing?" Zola's *Lourdes* gives a striking picture of crowds pouring out of the cities of the way for healing.

32. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34. And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

SCENE I. JESUS SUDDENLY TAKES A BOAT WITH HIS DISCIPLES AND CROSSES THE LAKE INTO THE PROVINCE OF HEROD PHILIP, Matt. 14:13; Mk. 6:30, 31. Jesus was in the vicinity of Capernaum, his usual headquarters when in Galilee, waiting for the return of the Twelve who had been touring two by two throughout the region.

Late one evening, or early one morning, two delegations reached Jesus almost at the same time.

1. The Twelve returned from their tour and gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things they had done and taught; reporting upon the sermons they had preached, the conversations they had held, the miracles which Christ (Matt. 10:1) had given them power to work.

2. "Their return seems to have synchronized with the arrival of John's disciples" (*Professor Swele*) bringing the report of the murder of John by Herod Antipas, and the story of Herodias and her daughter.

Both of these combined to point to a temporary withdrawal from public work.

He was living in Galilee, the province of Herod Antipas who had murdered John at the request of Herodias. And "he might think it desirable to follow up his murder of John by silencing John's successor." — *Professor Swele*.

The excitement on account of Herod's murder of the prophet might end in a political revolt, which was entirely contrary to the plans and principles of Jesus in inaugurating his kingdom, and yet he might be involved in it, or seem to be, if he remained. Hence it was wise to cross over the Jordan to the other side of the lake into the province of Herod Philip.

Moreover the disciples needed a quiet retreat with Jesus, for rest and comfort and instruction, which they could not obtain where they were, for **there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.** Jesus had probably been away too, and the people missed his teaching and healing power.

They needed this restful retirement (1) for physical rest; (2) for instruction in review of their labors; (3) for communion with God; (4) for that wider and truer view of their work which comes from seeing it as a whole, as a landscape is seen from a mountain top. No one can do his best work without periods of rest from work.

Every night a good sleep; every week a sabbath of rest; periods of rest during the year; friendly visits; holidays; religious festivals; — if we would make the most of life.

Every tree and plant must have its resting time. We put our hyacinths in the dark a few weeks if we would have them bloom well. There is a kind of crystallizing process, and "unconscious cerebration," going on in the mind and in the soul

35. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed:

36. Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

during these periods of rest. Moreover the fountain needs often filling if it would flow freely.

Hence early in the morning Jesus and his disciples entered into the familiar boat, and sailed about four miles a little to the N. E. to the plain of Butaiha, belonging to Bethsaida (Luke 9:10), a "desert"; *i.e.*, an uncultivated, uninhabited place, a short distance southeast of Bethsaida, on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee, in the province of Herod Philip. "It was at the southeastern angle of this plain, where the hills come down close to the shore, that Thomson places the site of the feeding of the five thousand." — *Andrews*.

SCENE II. THE PRIVATE SCHOOL ON THE HILLSIDE, Mark 6:32; John 6:3. Here the disciples could tell Jesus about their work in Galilee, a report which had been interrupted by the crowd. Now they would report in detail their successes and mistakes, where they were in doubt, and where they seemed to have acted wisely. Everything was laid before Jesus for his criticism, his praise, his guidance, his suggestions. Doubtless as in the return of the seventy a few months later (Luke 10:17-20) they "returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us"; when Jesus showed them that they placed too much emphasis on their power over evil spirits, and not enough on the spiritual and moral nature of the kingdom of heaven.

How long this private session with Jesus continued we do not know, but probably for some time. So should we tell Jesus all we do and speak. (1) It will comfort us to have his sympathy. (2) It will make us feel more clearly that we are workers together with him. (3) It will keep us from those things that we are unwilling to tell. (4) It will bring us into more intimate friendship and acquaintance with Jesus.

SCENE III. THE GATHERING MULTITUDES. A FIELD WHITE UNTO HARVEST. JESUS REAPING THAT HARVEST, Mk. 6:33, 34; Luke 9:11; John 6:2, 5. The people noticed the sailing of Jesus over the Sea of Galilee, and could watch the course of the boat nearly all the way to Bethsaida. The great roads to Jerusalem passed near the head of the lake. These were thronged with pilgrims going up to the Passover, who thus had leisure to stop and see and hear the great prophet. Pilgrims from every part of Galilee were also going up to Jerusalem. They had broken away from their homes and business, and had time to go out of their way to see and hear him whose fame had gone out over the whole region. They flocked from all directions, some over the sea, some by the land route along the northern shore, the numbers increasing from every city and village on the way; for at this time the western and northern shores were populous with towns and villas.

After Jesus had had his interview with his disciples, ending perhaps towards noon, he saw the multitudes waiting for him to come down from the mountain, and he came filled with compassion for them as sheep without a shepherd.

Picture Jesus going out among the multitudes with a healing here and a helpful word there. It is quite probable that the disciples also were mingling with the crowds and doing what they could to help, and learning from the Master how to do their work better in the future.

He received them, and welcomed them (the Am. R. here is especially graphic) weary as he was, and in search of much-needed rest. "The Son of man is never indignant at eagerness and importunity, always at indifference." **And he healed their sick.** Showing the nature of the Gospel he preached, what his kingdom meant for suffering humanity, a river of healing for body and soul that widened as it flowed toward his millennial reign, proving the sincerity of his compassion. **And spake unto them of the kingdom of God.** The kingdom which he wished them to enter; the kingdom he had come to set up in the hearts of men; the kingdom of love, of truth, of righteousness, of heaven. Whatever he could do for the good of body or soul Jesus did.

Note that Teaching and Healing went together. Jesus knows our temporal wants as well as our spiritual. But now, as then, he leads us through earthly to spiritual

37. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38. He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

blessings. The lower are a means to the higher. All workers for Jesus must follow this example. Christianity is a river of blessings flowing through the world, blessings to the bodies and minds as well as the souls of men. And blessing the body is a proof of its power to bless the soul, and of the sincerity of those who teach and preach.

SCENE IV. THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS. THE MULTITUDE WEARY AND HUNGRY, Mk. 6:35-38; Luke 9:12, 13; John 6:5-9. Toward evening, when the day was now far spent, and Jesus had doubtless retired to the hills again with the disciples for a little rest, Jesus lifted up his eyes (John). From the hill overlooking the plain. Saw a great company come unto him. He had been among the multitude, but now from his afternoon rest with his disciples he took the whole in at one view.

Putting all the four Gospels together the discussion would be like this:

Jesus (speaking to Philip, whose home was at Bethsaida, and who, therefore, was acquainted with the region and the people). Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? (John.)

Philip. Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. (John.) (It would be impossible for the Twelve to have so much money with them. For the penny was the silver penny = a denarius, = 16¢ = the pay for a day's work. In silver 200 pennyworth = about \$32; but in value compared with a day's wages it would be worth \$300 to \$400 to-day.)

The Apostles. Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and country round about, and lodge and get victuals. (Luke.) Most of the throng were Passover pilgrims and not people from the vicinity.

Jesus. They need not depart (Matthew); give ye them to eat (Mark). This Jesus said to prove them (John), whether they had such faith in him as the Messiah

to believe that he could supply the multitude with food, as Moses did the Israelites in the wilderness with manna, or as Elijah supplied the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:13-16). "This gives us a glimpse into the educational method of the great teacher." — *Watkins.* For he himself knew what he would do (John).

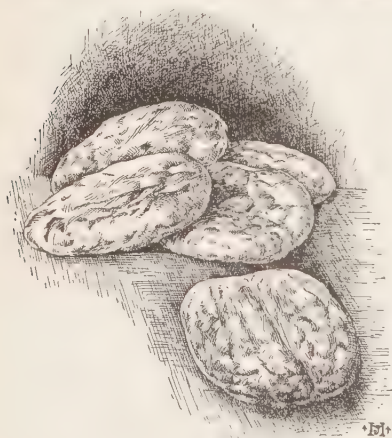
The Apostles (amazed). Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? (Mark.)

Jesus. How many loaves have ye? Go and see. (Mark.)

Andrew (returning from the search, and speaking for the apostles). There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? (John.) The loaves were round, flat cakes like large crackers. Barley was the food of the poorest people. The lad probably brought them for his own lunch, possibly to find a market for them. Two small fishes. "The Greek (*osparia*) is a

diminutive; it properly means what was eaten along with the bread, and specially refers to the small and generally dried or pickled fish eaten with bread, like our 'sardines' or the 'caviar' of Russia, the pickled herrings of Holland and Germany. Millions were caught in the lake. We know that both the salting and pickling of them was a special industry among its fishermen." — *Edersheim.* "What are they among so many?" Five crackers and two sardines for five thousand hungry men, besides women and children!

Jesus. Bring them hither to me. (Matt.)



Type of Oriental Bread.

SCENE V. THE BOY THAT HELPED JESUS FEED 5000 MEN, John 6:9.

It may make this story more interesting to the younger classes if the teacher should make it "vivid by appointing one boy as Philip and have him bring forward the 'little lad' bearing five round pieces of paper and two cut in the shape of fishes. Arrange the class in a hollow square open at one side and have 'Philip' distribute pieces of 'bread' and 'fish.' Have the scholars return these pieces to you, and let each, as he does so, tell of some little service that Christ wants from the children.

It is quite possible that when Christ bade his disciples "Bring them hither to me," he included in "them" not only the five loaves (about the size of one of our griddle cakes), and the fishes, but also the boy who had brought them for his own supper. He could easily have eaten that amount. Jesus loved boys then as he does now.

Imagine how you would feel if you had been that boy. "This is a charming lesson for small boys. Notice that Christ almost always had men in partnership with him in working his greatest miracles. How interested this boy must have been, not to have eaten that lunch of his, while even men were getting hungry! — for boys are always hungry." — *Bishop Warren.*

Illustration. "A little girl was once gathering the crumbs from the table to feed the birds. The maid who was in the room said, 'O Miss Dolly, God feeds the birds. You need not trouble about them.' 'Yes,' said Dolly seriously, 'but I like to help him!'" — *Grace Winter.*

Compare the little maid who told Naaman how he could be healed.

Library. Browning's *The Boy and the Angel.*

"If we are hoping to reform mankind, we must begin, not with adults whose habits and ideals are set, but with children who are still plastic. We must begin with children in the home, the school, the street, and the playground." — *Charles W. Eliot, President-Emeritus of Harvard University.*

This young boy was a small Christian Endeavor Society, perhaps one of the Juniors.

Illustration. "When Count Zinzendorf was a boy at school, he founded amongst his schoolfellows a little guild which he called the 'Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed,' and thereafter that seedling grew into the great tree of the Moravian Brotherhood, whose boughs were a blessing to the world." — *Farrar.*

"Only five barley loaves!
Only two fishes small!
And shall I offer these poor gifts
To Christ, the Lord of all?
To him whose mighty word
Can still the angry sea,
Can cleanse the lepers, raise the dead?
He hath no need of me.
Yes, he hath need of thee;
Then bring thy loaves of bread;

"Behold, with them, when Jesus speaks,
The multitude is fed.
And when thine eyes shall see
The holy ransomed throng,
In heavenly fields, by living streams,
By Jesus led along,
Unspeakable thy joy shall be,
And glorious thy reward,
If, by thy barley loaves, one soul
Has been brought home to God."

Note. Within the last few years there have arisen certain great movements for young boys and girls which are now wide-spread in America and England, such as the Boy Scouts, Knights of King Arthur, Campfire Girls, and similar movements; which are really helping the young to do what the boy with the loaves and fishes did when he brought them to Jesus, for His service.

The Scout Law is but one instance of such service, —

To do my duty to God and my Country.

To help other people at all times.

To obey scout law, namely

1. A scout's honor is to be trusted.

2. A scout is loyal to his officers, his parents, his country, his employers.

3. He is expected to do something each day to help others without pay.

4. He obeys orders because it is his duty.

5. He is courteous to all.

6. He is a friend to animals.

7. To keep himself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

And many other things.

But to do these things well the scouts must learn how; and this is a large part of their mingled play and work.

Not long ago a village church had so many members opposed to the Scout movement led by their pastor, that they attempted to dismiss him. I do not know with

39. And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42. And they did all eat, and were filled.

43. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

what success. But, in fact, these movements are among the best means, through the Church and Sunday School influences, of bringing the boys to Christ. For whenever boys or girls promise to practise the laws of Christ they are on the way to accept Him as Leader and Saviour. The work is chiefly in the hands of religious men.

In the village church to which I belong the pastor has found that the Knights of King Arthur, of which there are nearly fifty members, give one of the greatest opportunities of reaching the young men. They nearly all go to Sunday School, and on one Communion Sunday 17 of them joined the church together.

SCENE VI. THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES, Mark 6 : 39-42.

THE BRILLIANT FLOWER GARDEN.

Jesus commanded them to make all sit down. For three reasons: (1) That there might be no unseemly crowding, with the disasters and crushing of the weak, which would naturally follow a rush; (2) "that they might understand they were to have a full meal and not a mere bite they could take in their hand in passing" (*Exp. Greek Test.*); (3) for the convenience of distribution, so that none should be overlooked. Now there was much grass in the place (John). The grass was luxuriant at this time of the year. They were arranged in ranks, by hundreds and fifties, and thus their number was easily known. Either there were fifty rows of one hundred men, or they were arranged in fifty *triclina*, i.e., three sides of a parallelogram, according to Roman custom, each consisting of a hundred men. "Each hundred constituted a distinct *party*, or *triclinium*, and would be separated by a convenient interval from all the other hundreds." — *Morison*.

The words *in ranks* mean literally "Garden Plats." "With their bright-colored, Oriental dresses, — these men, sitting cross-legged on the ground in groups, presented an appearance which recalled a brilliant garden in the early summer"; the red, blue and yellow dresses (which the poorest Orientals wear) contrasting with the green grass.

And when Jesus had taken the five loaves. That it might be known whence the supply came. He looked up to heaven. Thus recognizing the Giver of all good. And blessed, "gave thanks" (John). The example of Jesus in blessing the bread before eating should be followed by all his disciples now in open recognition that we are his disciples. His was a blessing of power; but we can receive a blessing of power from him by asking. Food mingled with gratitude, love, and obedience is doubly good.

"'Twas seedtime when he blessed the bread,
'Twas harvest when he brake."

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour the mill;
And back of the mill is the wheat and the shower,
The sun and the Father's will."

— *Maltbie D. Babcock, D.D.*

In Partnership with Jesus. Distributors of God's Blessings. He gave them to his disciples to set before them. Jesus conferred a great privilege on the disciples in making them the instruments of conferring his bounty. Jesus could have rained manna from heaven, or summoned angels to help, but he gave this privilege to his disciples. The fountain that gives forth what it receives is fresh and clear and beautiful. The bog that receives and does not give is malarious, foul, reptile-haunted.

"If you bring no gift, how can God use it? The lad must bring his barley loaves to Christ before the five thousand can be fed. Have you ever attempted to do as he did? Have you, even in the smallest measure, or with the least earnest desire, tried to follow John Wesley's golden advice: 'Do all the good you can, by all the

means you can, in all the ways you can, to all the persons you can, in all the places you can, as long as ever you can?" — *Farrar*.

The business of every church and every individual is to distribute God's blessing to others. When we give freely what God gives us, when we as individuals and churches distribute to others the blessings God bestows, we shall find that more is left than we received at first. A missionary church doing most and giving most for the heathen is most prosperous at home in all spiritual usefulness. Individuals will find the same rule holding true. They gain spiritual life by imparting it. They gain clearer views of truth by teaching others. This is one of the teacher's greatest rewards. They grow richer in all that is best in life by giving freely of the money that God gives them.

What are these among so many? — Again and again in their future work would arise the question, "what are these among so many?" These few disciples, these few instrumentalities, these weak powers, these few principles of truth, — what are these among the millions of people to be brought into the kingdom, and the mighty powers of opposition to be overthrown? Jesus by his miracle showed them that in him lay the power that could multiply these feeble instrumentalities. It was a miracle of instruction in cheer and hope and faith, a miracle of promise of victory.

"Most of us have only one talent, but he who has one talent sometimes makes ten of it. We have only five barley loaves, etc., which indeed in themselves are useless, but when given to Christ he can make them enough to feed five thousand."

And still we ask the same question, as we stand in the presence of the evils to be overcome, the work to be done, the multitudes to be converted to Christ, the power of the enemy. The hope of the world's salvation is in the wonderful power of God in multiplying the little. Most of the great results in the world have begun thus.

SCENE VII. GATHERING UP THE FRAGMENTS, Mark 6:43; John 6:12. **Gather up the fragments.** The pieces that were multiplied and that remained unconsumed because of the abundant supply. **That nothing be lost.** (1) "This was for these Orientals a most important lesson in thrift. The poor are proverbially thriftless everywhere; but nothing could exceed the lavish wastefulness of the poor Oriental when a moment of good fortune has filled his hands with plenty. He absolutely takes no thought for the morrow, and, if reminded of the coming day, will calmly reply, 'The Lord will provide!'" — *Rev. Wm. Ewing*.

Twelve baskets full. "The word translated 'baskets' in our common version means pockets or wallets. The twelve baskets were probably the twelve wallets of the twelve apostles, which they carried on their journeys." — *Dr. Deems*. "They were small hand-baskets specially provided for the Jews to carry Levitically clean food while on a journey."

SCENE VIII. A SECOND BATTLE WITH THE TEMPTER, AND A GLORIOUS VICTORY, John 6:14, 15. There was one result of the feeding of the five thousand which was unexpected by the disciples. The people were so convinced by what Jesus had done and by his other miracles that he must be the Messiah, that they tried by force to make him their king, such as would fulfil their ideas of what a Messiah was to be. Where else would they find a king who could feed his army without expense or trouble, who could cure his wounded soldiers by a word, and had divine power at his command? With him for a leader, taking advantage of the discontent, the whole people would rise up, overthrow Herod, go to Jerusalem, make it their capital, throw off the Roman yoke, and enter upon the glorious career God had promised.

They were looking for the days promised through Isaiah, when "of the increase of His government there shall be no end upon the throne of David"; when "no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper"; when "the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

The people left out the one great condition of success, — righteousness, obedience, justice, that runs through all the promises.

Then came to him the vision by which the devil had tempted him in the wilderness, when there passed before him "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." Not only the splendid courts and cities like Rome, but the kingdoms of literature, art, and culture in Greece; the "barbaric pearls and gold" of the Orient; and possibly a vision of the future, with its glorious civilizations, with its redeemed peoples, fulfilling all that the prophets foretold, or John in Patmos saw of the new heavens and the new earth.

"The kingdoms of the world thine eyes behold
Like a great map unrolled."

"It was Satan's masterpiece." No waiting for long centuries for wrongs to cease, but the very things he had come on purpose to gain. There will be no slow and painful process, no conflict, no persecutions, no great self-denials, no martyrdoms, no soul lost; but the new era, the good time coming, will burst at once into noon-tide glory over all the earth.

Milton, in his "Paradise Regained," pictures with matchless skill "our Lord as lost in meditation upon the means by which his kingdom can be founded and built up."

There was but one condition, — that all these kingdoms should be ruled by the laws of the Devil.

And now, after this great work, the Tempter had come to him with another assault. The same bright vision had appeared again; and in the same trying circumstances. In the words of Weiss, — "the work of his life, on which he had spent unremitting labor and warmest love, lay in ruins at his feet. He had not succeeded in overcoming his people: the powers had conquered, which rule in the darkness of this world." Jesus was standing alone against a Niagara current of misleading influences. The action of the people to make him a king was a renewal of one of his greatest temptations, — to obtain immediate success by a worldly kingdom, instead of a spiritual kingdom and the salvation of men by the slow way of the cross.

Jesus sent the disciples toward him on the boat; and then he withdrew again into the mountain himself alone (John) to pray (Mark). Two sentences hint at his feelings. For his disciples understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened (Mark). And the other, spoken to the multitude, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the signs, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled (John).

SCENE IX. JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE. *This scene* belongs to the following morning on the shore of the lake near Capernaum; after Jesus met his disciples in the storm. He immediately began to heal the sick; and to teach them that he was the Bread of Life. He not only gives us eternal life by his Spirit, but his coming, his life, his resurrection, and his abiding presence, are all means to this life.

(1) He satisfies every hunger of the soul. Mind and spirit are even more full of hungers than is the body, — the hunger for forgiveness, for a better life, for communion with God, for immortal life, for larger spheres, for usefulness, for happiness, for knowledge. Christ's salvation is as many sided as the nature of man.

(2) Jesus is the bread of life because he fulfils for the soul another function of food for the body, which is to generate warmth, vitality, energy, power, activity. This is one work of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus gives to us. "I live," says Paul, "and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." See Gal. 2 : 20; Col. 2 : 19.

"'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh, life, not death, for which we pant,
More life, and fuller, that we want." — Tennyson.

It is easy to see that "eating Christ" is coming into close contact with his heart and character, by studying him, by loving him, by keeping in sympathy with him, by working with him for his cause. It means a definite choice of him, keeping him before us as an ideal, till each of us finds him

"Closer to us than breathing,
Nearer than hand or foot."

and

"His being working in my own,
The footsteps of his life in mine."

LESSON XIII. — March 31.

REVIEW: JESUS OUR EXAMPLE IN SERVICE.

READ Phil. 2 : 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus.* — PHIL. 2 : 5.

Primary Topic: Jesus Our Example in Helping Others.

Memory Verse: Follow me. — Matt. 9 : 9.

OR

EASTER LESSON. — 1 Cor. 15 : 50-58.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* — 1 COR. 15 : 57.

SUBJECT: THE HOLY LAND, — IN WHICH THE EVENTS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING TOOK PLACE, —; AND THE STORY OF EASTER.

There is great advantage in having the Land where Jesus lived and worked so indelibly impressed on mind and memory that at any time one can shut his eyes and see the whole picture spread out before him.

Certain events have recently attracted the attention of all Christians with a new fascination to

"Those Holy Fields
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross."

Professor Huntington of Yale has a fine volume on *Palestine and its Transformation*. And that excellent periodical, *The Sunday School Times*, has recently had articles by David Baron of London, and William T. Ellis, LL.D., of Philadelphia, and has permitted me to call attention to their facts of fascinating interest.

"The late Dr. Adolph Saphir began one of his lectures on the Bible by reminding his audience of the following three fundamental facts:

"*First.* There is a Book which is different from all other books — the writings of Moses and the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, commonly called the Book, or Bible.

"*Second.* There is a NATION different from all other nations, a peculiar people with a history wonderful from the beginning hitherto — the Jews, or the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"*Third.* There is a MAN different from all other men, the Man Christ Jesus — Son of the Virgin Mary, of the seed of Abraham, the King of the Jews, and Light of the Gentiles, the Lord from heaven, and the Son of the Most High, blessed forever.

"*Fourth.* To these three I would add one more fundamental fact: There is a LAND different from all other lands, which, like the Book, and the Nation and the Man Christ Jesus, concerns the whole of humanity — 'PALESTINE,' 'The Holy Land,' — the cradle of God's self-revelation, and the center of God's governmental dealings with all the nations of the earth.

"These four, —

The Wonderful Book,
The Peculiar Nation,
The Glorious Man,

And the Land where in the fulness of time the Eternal Word himself became flesh and dwelt among men,
all these, I say, are interrelated, and must be studied together if we are to have a proper understanding of any one of them.

"Palestine, if not exactly the physical center, was certainly intended of God to be the moral and spiritual center of the world. But even geographically the position of Palestine is most central.

"In olden times it stood midway between the three greatest nations of antiquity: Assyria, Egypt, and Greece; and today it not only remains 'the key between the East and the West,' but commands equal facilities of access to Europe, Africa, and Asia.

"There is no country which holds such an important and central place in the world's history, or which has exercised such an influence on the destiny of mankind.

"And since in his infinite wisdom it pleased God to choose one people as the medium of his self-revelation to the whole of mankind, he placed that people in the most central position possible." — *David Baron, the Hebrew-Christian Leader.*

Palestine was the best place in the whole world for this *Training School of God*, for educating a nation in true religion, the worship of the true God, and the morals, righteousness, and character which are the essentials of the development of mankind into the true kingdom of God. It was a small, secluded country, defended by the Mediterranean on the west, mountains on the north, deserts and the Jordan ravine on the east, and the vast Arabian desert on the south. The great highways from Babylonia to Egypt, and later, to Rome, ran along the Mediterranean coast, or east of the Jordan, so that Jerusalem amid the rugged highlands was sheltered from attack more than any other capital.

Some Striking Facts. *First.* "The Promised Land is still the Land of Promise; it has never yet become the Land of Possession. The territory covered by the excellent map of Western Palestine brought out by the Palestine Exploration Fund of Great Britain, which included, roughly speaking, an area of about 6000 square miles, is all which the Jews in the past can be said to have really possessed."

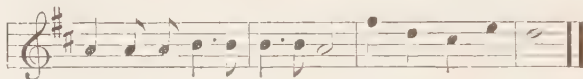
Second. "It is a remarkable fact that through the many centuries of Israel's banishment and wanderings among the nations, while the people has been without a land, and has never in God's providence been permitted to settle down for long anywhere in any of the lands of their dispersion, the land which God has sworn to give them for an everlasting possession has remained practically without a people, and this in spite of the fact that from earliest times it has been the coveted prize of all."

Third. " Since the new phase in the Dispersion brought about by the rejection of Christ, many Gentile nations have sought to establish their dominion over it. It has been occupied in turn by Romans, Persians, Saracens, Crusaders, Mamelukes, Tartars, and Turks ; but none of them have been permitted to possess it for long.

"The Turk has been permitted of God in more recent times to tread it down and to desolate it, but he cannot be said to have possessed it. Rather has he served in God's good providence as the custodian to prevent others from taking possession of it, and as the unconscious guardian of the land until the lawful possessors should return. If Palestine, Mesopotamia, etc., had all this time been in the possession of a strong and progressive power the land would have been opened up, developed, and fully occupied, and there would have been no room in it for the Jews to return.

"Truly it is no mere poetic fancy to say that, if there is 'a people without a land,' Palestine has for many centuries been 'A land without a people.'"

Fourth. "As sure and certain as the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it, Israel shall yet again be planted upon their own land never more to be pulled up out of it. Then also, when the Spirit of grace and supplication is poured upon them, and their hearts are first broken with penitent sorrow and then filled with burning love and enthusiasm for their long-rejected, crucified Messiah, who shall yet reign 'on Mount Zion and before his ancients gloriously,' Palestine will indeed become the center for the blessing of the whole earth." — *David Baron.*



He watching over Is-ra-el, slumbers not nor sleeps.

There is no miracle in the Bible so wonderful as the providential miracle running through 3000 years of the history of the Jews, and their Promised Land.

Read *Jerusalem's Locust Plague*, which occurred in the Spring of 1915, as reported in the December number of the *National Geographic Magazine* (Washington, D. C. 25¢), for the most realistic description by eye-witnesses; making intensely vivid some features of the Holy Land, and Bible references.

Railroad Map of Palestine, from which railroad trade routes branch out toward the most familiar places of ancient Bible lands.

1. *The oldest railroad* is from Jaffa on the Mediterranean (the Joppa of Jonah, Peter, Dorcas, and Simon the Tanner), S.E. to Lydda, and to Jerusalem, about 30 miles as the crow flies.

2. *The French Railroad*, from Haifa on the bay of Acre at the foot of Mt. Carmel (at the foot of which Elijah had his dramatic conflict) runs S.E. through southern Galilee, crosses the Jordan at Bethabara (where John baptized Jesus), thence close to the Lake, eastward to the Hauran, and then north to Damascus.

3. Two new lines have been recently built. The first two have been united in one by a line north and south through the Holy Land. The new construction connects with the Jaffa-Jerusalem section at Lydda, and strikes north through ancient Samaria, with an important station at Nablus, which is the Shechem of the Bible story. It connects with the Haifa line a few miles directly south of Nazareth, and thus continues on over the Hijaz Railway to Damascus.

4. A complete railway system has been established "linking Beersheba, a southernmost point in Palestine, on the border of the Sinai Desert, with the extreme north of Syria, far beyond the Dan of Bible times ; so that it is less than the truth to say that a railway now runs ' From Dan to Beersheba.'

"On the way to Beersheba the new railway line touches Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Rachel and Rebekah lie buried. This sacred site is now a military depot. The field of Machpelah, about which we read in the Book of Genesis, now holds a railway station.

"Periodically one reads of street-car lines projected in Jerusalem—a feat which is actually impossible within the city itself, because of the narrow and vaulted streets, where one must stand aside to let even a camel or donkey pass. Outside the walls, and to link up Bethlehem and Emmaus, and other suburbs, it is quite possible to introduce an electric line. Into some parts of Jerusalem electric lights have come, and the telephone is no longer an impossibility."

From Damascus the railroad runs north to Asia Minor and one branch turns to the west and another to the east; so that "the conductor may cry, 'All aboard for Constantinople, Ephesus, Old Philadelphia, Tarsus, Nineveh, Bagdad and Babylon. Special side-trip to Damascus and Jerusalem. Stopover at Rebekah's Well'; and on to Bagdad and the old Garden of Eden."

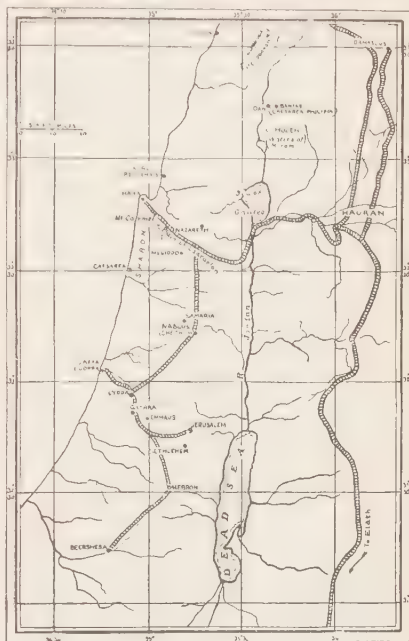
The Hero of the Dardanelles. "But what has the Dardanelles to do with the Bible?" some Sunday-school boy may ask. It is scarcely possible that any teacher has failed to point out, in his interpretation of the times, and the Bible, the fact, that, transcending in romantic interests the feats of Leander and Byron and Xerxes and Alexander on the Dardanelles, or the wars of Troy, or the other heaped-up events of classical history which were enacted along this strip of water—anciently named the Hellespont, and which we now call the Dardanelles—was that unnoted day when a certain little man, a watery-eyed Jewish scholar, in travel-worn cloak and sandals, stood on the shores of this same water at a place then called Troas, near the western entrance to the Dardanelles, and looking across from Asia to Europe, coveted what he saw for his Christ. That traveler saw a vision of a man in Macedonia crying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us!' Scholars have rated that incident, unnoticed at the time, as one of the critical dates in the history of the world, for it gave Christianity to Europe.

"So whenever we read of the Dardanelles, we are bound to think of Paul, a greater warrior than any who ever fought on the same spot. Salonika reminds us that this is none other than the city of Thessalonica, to whose citizens Paul wrote two of the letters that are in our New Testament. Thessalonica of old, as is the Salonika of today, was noted for the number of its Jews.

"A suggestion for those persons who would be best informed and most up-to-date on the war news is that the Bible maps are the clearest interpreters of the latest military movements. A chart of Paul's missionary journeys from the back of our Bibles is a better exposition of what is going on in the Balkans and Turkey than most newspaper maps."

Most of the above is condensed from *Wm. T. Ellis, LL.D.*, in *The Sunday School Times*.

(This study of the railroads was of necessity written over a year before the book is to be used, in 1918, and may have to be modified because of events of 1917.)



Railroad Map of Palestine.



SECOND QUARTER.

THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD.

STUDIES IN MARK.

APRIL 7—JUNE 30, 1918.

LESSON I (XIV). — April 7.

JESUS SETS MEN FREE. — Mark 7: 1-37.

PRINT Mark 7: 24-35.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* — JOHN 8: 36.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 72 : 1-17.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 15 : 1-31 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 17, 18 ; Gal. 5 : 1-25.

Primary and Junior Topic : Jesus and the Deaf Man.

Lesson Material : Mark 7 : 31-37.

Memory Verse : He hath done all things well : he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. — Mark 7 : 37.

Senior and Adult Topic : Christian Liberty.

Additional Material : See same for Teachers.

TEACHER. How many of your scholars have read the scripture lesson?

TO SCHOLARS. What is the title of this lesson?

TEACHER. Look over the whole scripture selection, and see how many things there are there that you want to be, or ought to be, free from.

TO SCHOLARS. Name them.

TEACHER. Turn to the Golden Text and to the Additional Material, and tell us how many other things are mentioned from which we ought to be free.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Summer, A.D. 29.

Place. — Capernaum, Phœnicia, and Decapolis. All included in the Galilean ministry.

Place in the Life of Christ. — About the middle of the third year of his ministry.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus Sets Men Free.

INTRODUCTION. WHAT IS FREEDOM?

I. FREEDOM FROM A MERELY FORMAL RELIGION.

Illustrated by eating with unwashed hands, Mk. 7 : 1-5.

II. FREEDOM FROM SELFISH BREAKING OF GOD'S LAW.

Illustrated by the Fifth Commandment, Mk. 7 : 9-13.

III. FREEDOM FROM A SINFUL HEART.

Illustrated by the New Heart, Mk. 7 : 19-21.

IV. TWO ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES, Mk. 7 : 24-36.



HEAD OF CHRIST.
(From "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler.")

Hofmann.

LEARN BY HEART.

2 Cor. 3 : 17, 18 ; Gal. 5 : 19-23.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

What is freedom?

What is the glorious liberty of the children of God?

Why cannot one sin and yet be free? John 8 : 34.

Name the different things in this lesson from which

Christ can free us.

What defiles a man?

The source of most of the evils in the world?

How does Christ give us the victory?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

*Commentaries on Mark and Matthew. Works on the Miracles.*Horton's *Cartoons of St. Mark*, "The Cartoon of Healing." Dr. Burton's *Christ's Acted Parables*. Dr. Nevius' *Demon Possession in China*. Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*.Schürer's *Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Div. 2, vol. 2, pp. 106-125.Farrar's *Life of Lives*, "Pharisaic Re-ligionism." Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, 2 : 10. Dr. Rice's *Orientalisms in Bible Lands*, p. 101.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The slavery of sin is illustrated by Lord Marmion, in Scott's *Poems*; Eugene Aram, in Hood's *Poems*; the veiled prophet of Khorassan, in Moore's *Lalla Rookh*; Richard III. and Macbeth, in Shakespeare.Freedom by the Truth. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Series 8, "The Great Liberator"; F. W. Robertson's *Sermons*, Series 1, "Freed by the Truth"; R. C. Trench's *Westminster Sermons*, "The Slavery of Sin."

THE LESSON IN ART.

The Canaanitish Woman, Palma Vecchio,* Drouais.**Jesus Heals a Deaf Man*, Bida.*

* In Wilde's Bible Pictures.

The seventh chapter of Mark records a number of things from which we ought to be free, indeed, from which we must be free, if we would make the most possible out of our lives. For this reason the Committee gave to this lesson the topic JESUS SETS MEN FREE; and they chose for their guiding subject the Golden Text, — If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

OUR INTRODUCTION, therefore, will be along the same lines. What is Freedom? From what must we become free if we are to live the best and most useful lives, — lives worth the living?

"The truth shall make you free."

Jesus, through the truth, gives us mental freedom.

Jesus gives the liberty of free activity. The Christian's whole life, so far as it is Christian, is the free, joyous outflow of his Christian heart; as the fountain flows, as the bird sings, as the child plays, as the artist paints, as the orator speaks. He gives, he prays, he does good, because he loves to.

Illustration. Laws are like fences by the roadside, a restraint to those who wish to do evil; but to those who wish to travel, not to trespass, they are guides, and not restraints.

Illustration. Just as the child, after it has learned to read through the bondage of alphabets and grammars and dictionaries, comes into the glorious freedom of literature, and roams through all its fields without thinking of the alphabet or grammar; as the musician, after his training in the laws of music, comes into the freedom where it is a part of his nature to act according to those laws, and soars away beyond them in the delights and ecstasies of song or oratorio, — so the Christian has entered a state far beyond the slavery of law, where it is natural and easy for him to do right; for he acts from love, not law. He belongs to a higher sphere of action.

William Tell is represented as overtaken in the Swiss mountains by a furious storm, and there raising his head against the blast,

"Cried in thralldom to that furious wind,
Blow on; this is the land of liberty!"

So the Christian dwells in the land of liberty, and amid storms and trials, as he walks within the borders of his promised land, he can say to every impulse and desire of his renewed heart, "Blow on, this is the land of liberty."

The sinner is not free because he is compelled to bear the consequences of sin, against his will. He cannot escape from the gnawings of conscience. Lady Macbeth still washes her hands in vain, for "all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." Eugene Aram still feels that heaven and earth are leagued against him, for

"The secret then he knew was one
The earth refused to keep,

Or land or sea, though it should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep."

I. JESUS GIVES US FREEDOM FROM ALL MERE FORMAL DEAD RELIGION. ILLUSTRATED BY EATING WITH UNWASHED HANDS, Mk. 7: 1-5. Except they wash their hands oft, (Am. R., "diligently,") eat not. Let no one imagine that this custom refers to cleanliness, and health, and that Jesus was opposed to washing the hands for these purposes, before eating. He himself complained of the Pharisee's neglect to furnish the customary water for him at the feast to which he had invited him, and he washed the feet of the disciples at the last supper. "The Israelites, who, like other Oriental nations, fed with their fingers, washed their hands before meals, for the sake of cleanliness. But these customary washings were distinct from the ceremonial ablutions: in the former water was poured upon the hands; in the latter the hands were plunged in water.



Washing the Hands.

When, therefore, some of the Pharisees remarked that our Lord's disciples ate with 'unwashed hands,' it is not to be understood literally, that they did not at all wash their hands, but that they did not wash them ceremonially, according to their own practice."—*Cambridge Bible*, and so *Int. Crit. Com.* The Pharisaic law was a caricature, a distorted exaggeration of a law meant for health and cleanliness. "Based on the law of cleanness in Leviticus 11-15, no less than twelve treatises of the Mishna deal with this subject, and on the Levitical foundation is raised an enormous and complicated structure. Nothing was left to a free personality, everything was placed under the bondage of the letter. A healthy moral life could not flourish under such a burden, action was nowhere the result of inward motive, all was on the contrary weighed and measured. Life was a continual torment to the earnest man, who felt every moment that he was in danger of

[unconsciously] transgressing the law. On the other hand pride and conceit were almost inevitable for one who had attained to Mastership in the Knowledge of the Law."—*Schürer, The Jewish People in the Time of Christ*. So rigidly did the Jews observe these ceremonial purifyings, "that Rabbi Akiba, being imprisoned, and having water scarcely sufficient to sustain life given him, preferred dying of thirst to eating without washing his hands."

This is but one of the lesser evils of religious formality. How many now say the Lord's Prayer without wandering thoughts?

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus condemns formal religious ceremonies, empty of the real spirit of worship; as vain repetitions, praying to be seen of men, etc.

The *Oriental Prayer Wheel* is one method. The metal case, containing written prayers, is about three inches in diameter. It turns about a wire spindle, whirled by a slight movement of the hand, aided by the weight at the end of a chain. Every time the written prayer is turned around the prayer is supposed to be uttered to the people's god.

II. JESUS FREES US FROM A MEAN AND UTTERLY SELFISH WAY OF BREAKING THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT,—THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH PROMISE, Mk. 7: 9-13. There were certain ones among the Pharisees who had grown weary of supporting their aged parents. Their families may have been too large to find room for the old and worn out in their homes. We must remember how much sooner the old people grew dependent then than now, when we have spectacles and dentists and physicians to prolong their usefulness.

Moreover these younger ones were often expected to be liberal in their contributions toward the support of the Temple services.

Therefore these selfish neglecters of their parents, desirous of getting rid of the

burden, made a special arrangement with the Temple authorities called "Corban," that is to say "Given to God." They say to their father and mother, we can do no more for you, for that wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me, is given to God. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother.

But God's law given through Moses declares : Honor thy father and thy mother ; and Whoso curseth father and mother let him die the death (v. 10).

Children obey your parents in the Lord ; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth (Eph. 6: 1-3).

Note that Jesus uttered these truths to the Jews of his day in order to save the nation.

But the young people of to-day need these truths even more than the men of old. They should be written everywhere in letters of gold. They should be engraved on the conscience of every boy and girl.

How We Can Honor Our Parents.

1. By loving them, and expressing to them that love.

2. By obedience, free, glad, cheerful, overflowing.

3. By always treating them with respect, in heart, in word, and in action ; by that "best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love."

4. By using parents as your counsellors and friends.

5. By always acting in such a way that those who see you will know that you have good and wise parents.

That thy days may be long upon the land. Keeping this commandment tends to give a long, happy, prosperous life. And when the majority obey it, the nation shall abide long in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. Israel's later history is a commentary on this verse. Disobedience to parents quickly leads to disobedience to the laws of God and of country. It was stated at a meeting of the American Prison Discipline Association, as the result of inquiries into the history of criminals in the prisons of the United States, that in almost all cases their course of ruin began with disobedience to parents. And there is scarcely a sin that receives its retribution with more certainty than that of failing to honor father or mother.

"I never knew a boy who loved his home, and to whom it was a joy and pleasure to respect and obey his parents, who ever brought grief to his home or dishonor to his family." — *Governor Mount, of Indiana.*

This command applies to the mother as well as the father.

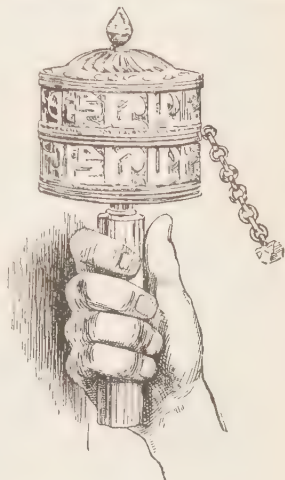
"WANTED — A boy who obeys his mother." So advertised one employer. Thousands of such boys are wanted. I never yet knew a lad prosper in the world that did not love his mother." — *Rev. J. Sherman.*

III. JESUS HAS COME TO FREE US FROM THE DEFILEMENT OF SINS THAT FLOW FROM A SINFUL HEART. Mk. 7: 17-23 ; Gal. 5: 19-21. All the evil things here named "have an inward origin, and are vomited forth from the crater of the heart or soul," the spiritual region of his being. — *Morison.* "The heart is here the seat of the affections, and the center of moral life." — *W. N. Clarke, D.D.*

The list of Mark's thirteen counts included outward deeds and evil thoughts, expressions of the state of the heart, the source of all these evils and many others.

Add to these the list of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5: 19-21), all over the world, and we have the forces marshalled under the principalities, the powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places (Eph. 6: 12). Jesus lays down the principle that what is taken into the body does not affect the character. It is the moral act, and not what is eaten, that defiles the man. Eating ambrosia and drinking nectar do not make one heavenly ; nor, if transubstantiation were true, could eating the real body of Jesus make one any better or holier.

These evils must be overthrown, utterly destroyed, if the world is to be saved.



Prayer Wheel from India.

Sketched from one in the author's study.

And this is to be done only by a change of heart. New hearts from which flow all the fruits of the Spirit are the means by which the world can be saved. No half-way measures will avail.

Now Jesus has come to set us free from these evils that are ruining men, by giving us new hearts, filled with the fruits of the Spirit. He began his mission by proclaiming repentance and faith and conversion, and new life, which are to conquer the wrongs that defile, and the hearts from which they flow. And this invitation is to be proclaimed over all the world, to overcome the evil with good.

There is an intense need of a true revival of religion over all the world with something of the power of the early Christian Pentecost.

One of the Most Remarkable Revivals in all History was that of Savonarola at Florence, and his *Bonfire of Vanities*, about four hundred years ago. For a time

his spirit dominated the city in a marvellous way. "So long as it lasted (two years) immorality and luxury were out of fashion in Florence. The vileness which calls itself pleasure was paralysed, and immodesty and impurity scared into corners out of sight." "The streets were safe, the populace quiet." The carnival under the Medici had been a very Saturnalia of license, and "none were more wildly riotous than the children," but Savonarola so controlled the passions of the street gamins, whom "all other kinds of authority had been tried in vain to curb in their frolic, especially the dangerous war with stones," that he organized them into bands, set them to collecting



Savonarola's Cell.
Church of San Marco, Florence.

money for the poor, at altars in the streets, and to collect the dresses and masks of the carnival, and they gave up their vile songs for hymns of praise. And on a Palm Sunday, when these same children marched in white robes and red crosses, "so much joy was there in all hearts that the glory of Paradise seemed to have descended on earth."

The great reformer Savonarola had an immense BONFIRE OF VANITIES in the Piazza, the great square in Florence. The youth of the city, in white robes with olive crowns on their heads, went from house to house gathering all the vanities of life — the apparatus for gambling, pictures that incited to vice, worldly musical instruments, rouge pots, false hair, perfumes, powders, mirrors, bad books, and many things that were perfectly innocent, but regarded as worldly. These were piled in a huge "Pyramid of Vanities" sixty feet high, crowned with a symbolic figure of the old debauched Carnival. Within were an abundance of fuel and gunpowder. This pile was set ablaze in the evening to the sound of trumpets, and the old Carnival tumbled into the flames amid the songs of reforming triumph.

For Savonarola's desire was to train the youth of Florence to have none but pure words on their lips, no pleasures save of an angelic sort, and a zeal for unseen good. However mistaken in some of the things he would burn up, yet "there is no kind of conscious obedience that is not an advance over lawlessness, and these boys became the generation of men who fought greatly and endured greatly in the last struggle of their Republic."

IV. TWO ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF HOW JESUS SETS PEOPLE FREE.

FIRST, THE STORY OF THE SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER, vs. 24-30. The opposition of the Pharisees became so great that it seemed wise for Jesus to leave his home at Capernaum. Accordingly he went westward to the Mediterranean, into the region of Tyre and Sidon, on the coast. The journey was not long, as Tyre is only about thirty-five miles, and Sidon fifty-five miles, from the Sea of

24. And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*: but he could not be hid.

25. For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

26. The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27. But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29. And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

Galilee. The population was heathen, but an active, commercial, and manufacturing people: wealthy, luxurious, and dissolute.

And entered into an house, and would have no man know it. Because he had gone there for safety and repose. But he could not be hid. There would certainly be those who had heard of Jesus, and his wonderful cures, and others who had seen him.

A *Syrophenician woman*, a Gentile by religion, a Greek as to language, a descendant of Canaanites of the Old Testament, had a daughter who was possessed with an unclean spirit. Matthew says she was grievously vexed with a demon.

The *Torment* of this disease may be learned from the description of similar cases. One such, a boy, is described as often falling into the fire, and often into the water (Matt. 17: 15). The spirit makes him dumb, "and whosoever he taketh him, he teareth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away" (Mk. 9: 17, 18).

The mother learned that Jesus was in the house and begged him to save and cure her daughter.

The Interview was like this (arranged from Matt. and Mark).

The woman comes to the house where Jesus is in retirement; or meets him and his disciples by the way, and falls down at his feet.

The woman: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

Jesus is silent, "he answered her not a word."

The disciples: "Send her away; for she crieth after us."

Jesus (to the woman): "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The woman (bowing before him in worship): "Lord, help me."

Jesus: "Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs."

The woman: "Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

Jesus: "O woman, great is thy faith; for this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter."

And she went away unto her house, and found the child laid upon the bed, and the demon gone out.

Note 1. Why was Jesus silent after all this pleading? His purpose seems to have been to increase her faith by exercising and expressing it. The blessing to her soul's growth was in the end far greater than it could otherwise have been. Jesus saw that his silence and delay would not "quench the smoking flax" of faith, and that there were great possibilities and opportunities of her spiritual growth.

Note 2. "The Jews in general, and the Pharisees with especial scorn, used to speak of all Gentiles as 'dogs,' and 'dog' in the East is the one expression which conveys the deepest contempt and hatred." — *Farrar*.

But this was not Jesus' own attitude or feeling. He stated the difficulty, and expressed the feeling which she knew the Jews had. But Jesus used another word than

31. And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

34. And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

the accustomed word, not "dogs" but "pet house-dogs." "The picture is of a family meal, with the pet house-dogs running round the table." — *M. R. Vincent*.

"There is a touch of infinite beauty and graciousness in the expression, which it is easy for us to miss."

Note 3. Great was the blessing brought to this mother by her faith in Jesus and in God. Her home was transformed from perpetual gloom and the shadow of death into love and friendship and hope and life. Her daughter "was no longer furious in passion, worn with hysteria, helpless in epilepsy, raving in blasphemy and invective; but was a sweet, pure, healthful maiden, the hope and joy of her mother." But also in the mother herself was one of the victories of faith, she was brought near to Jesus and to God, she had a new transforming spiritual life, with new visions, new ideals, new hopes, new usefulness.

Jesus had made her free.

THE SECOND STORY: THE CURE OF A DEAF AND DUMB MAN, vs. 31-36. Jesus and his disciples left the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon on the Mediterranean, and went to the other extreme, eastward beyond Jordan and the Sea of Galilee, into Decapolis, the District of the Ten Cities, the western boundary of which ran along the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee.

32. Among the many persons healed on this journey, described by Matthew (15: 29-31), was **one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech**. Some trouble with the vocal organs in addition to the deafness which usually affects the speech. The **spake plain** (v. 35) after the cure implies that the impediment would permit him to make only inarticulate sounds.

Those that brought him to Jesus beseech him to put his hand upon him, probably to aid the faith of the afflicted man, to bring him into sympathy with Jesus and confidence in him, and thus touch his spiritual nature. For, as Rev. Mr. Garvie says in the *Expositor*, "As far as possible every bodily cure must be accompanied by a spiritual change in the person cured. . . . Thus his miraculous activity was kept in vital unity with his spiritual influence."

33. He took him aside from the multitude privately (Am. R.). That the man apart from the distracting crowd might receive deeper spiritual impressions. There seems to have been some peculiar need of aiding and inspiring faith in this man, who seems to have come not of his own accord, but only when urged by others. Moreover, he could not hear any spoken word, and must be taught by signs. Hence, Jesus not only laid his hands on him, but put his fingers into his ears and he spit (Am. R., "spat") and touched his tongue.

34. And looking up to heaven. Still teaching the deaf man, by signs, the source of the healing and the value of prayer. He sighed. Groaned, an expression which the man could perceive of genuine grief at the human suffering produced by sin, and the difficulty of making men realize it. Ephphatha. The Aramaic, the modified Hebrew, spoken by the people, meaning, Be opened.

35. And straightway. The miraculous cure was instantaneous, showing that it was produced by divine power.

36. He charged them. Not only the man, but those who had brought him. That they should tell no man, "lest he should be thronged by the curious and idle," and he and his disciples be unable to have the rest and quiet teaching which they were seeking.

Thus in the two instances described, Jesus has been setting people free from their bodily infirmities and at the same time delivering them from their sins and imperfections, and bringing them into his spiritual kingdom.

LESSON II (XV). — April 14.

JESUS REQUIRES CONFESSION AND LOYALTY. —

Mark 8: 1 9: 1.

PRINT Mark 8:27-38.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* — MARK 8:34.

Devotional Readings: Rom. 10:8-10; Heb. 12:1, 2, 12-15.

Additional Material for Teachers: Luke 9:18-27, 57-62.

Primary and Junior Topic: Jesus and the Blind Man.

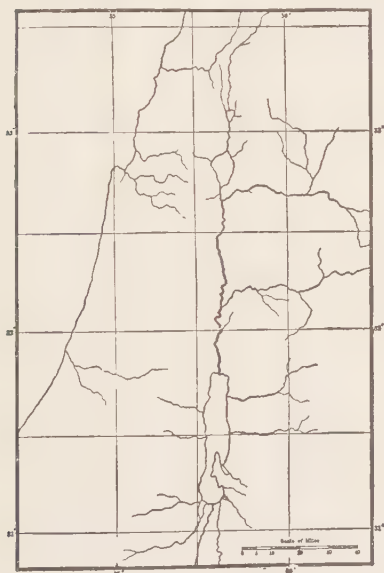
Lesson Material: Mark 8:22-26.

Primary Memory Verse: He hath done all things well. — Mark 7:37.

Additional Material for Senior and Adult: See same for Teachers.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO THE CLASS.

Tracing out the journeys of Jesus on a map will keep the younger children



Outline Map of Palestine.

interested, and make the life and work of Jesus real and clear to them. A map is an excellent help to restless boys and girls, and can be used with especial effect in this lesson, each one pointing out the places and noting the journeys, as the teacher leads them through this part of Jesus' life. Beginning at Capernaum, the home of Jesus, trace his movements

N. E. to the region of Tyre and Sidon (20 miles to the north). Thence back again, to Decapolis. Thence the disciples, led by Jesus, walked slowly up to Cæsarea Philippi, a short distance east of Dan, the northern point of Palestine, as Beersheba is the southern. (Outline maps of Palestine, $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9$ inches, may be obtained from W. A. Wilde Co. Price, one cent each.)

In this region were the sources of the Jordan.

LEARN BY HEART.

Mark 8:34-38.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why Jesus led his disciples on so long a journey.

What great Truth did He reveal to them?

What was Peter's confession?

What did the Rock symbolize?

What is it to take up the cross?

Why was it necessary that Jesus should die, in order to save the world?

The Keys.

How can losing one's life save it?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The summer of A.D. 29. About nine months before the crucifixion.

Place. — Near Cæsarea Philippi, in the northern part of Palestine, near Dan.

The Conversations on the road to the north, as Jesus walked and talked with his disciples in this lonely road, were full of interest.

A New Epoch. — We now begin to study a new epoch in the teaching and training of the Twelve.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A New Revelation in the Teaching of Jesus concerning Himself.

- I. HE LEADS HIS DISCIPLES TO REALIZE THAT HE IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH (= CHRIST), vs. 27-30.
- II. HE REVEALS TO THEM THAT AS THE MESSIAH (see Isa. 53) HE MUST SUFFER DEATH ON THE CROSS, BUT THAT IN THREE DAYS HE SHALL RISE FROM THE DEAD, v. 31.
- III. JESUS REBUKES THE LOYAL PETER, BECAUSE HE REVIVES SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS CAREER, vs. 32, 33.
- IV. THOSE WHO WOULD BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS MUST FOLLOW THEIR MASTER, EACH TAKING UP HIS OWN CROSS, vs. 34.
- V. PROFIT AND LOSS, vs. 35-38.
- VI. JESUS NOW THE EVER-LIVING SAVIOUR.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

James M. Campbell's *The Heart of the Gospel*, on the atoning death of Christ (Revell). Prof. Shailer Mathews' *The Messianic Hope in the New Testament* (Univ. of Chicago).

On Cæsarea Philippi and Mount

Hermon see Kelman's *The Holy Land*, pp. 13, 48, 59; Geo. Adam Smith's *Hist. Geography*. On vs. 18, 19, see Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The City of No Cross is a helpful allegory.

The Cross Bearer has twelve illustrations of different ways of bearing the cross (Am. Tract Soc. Probably out of print).

Gotthold's *Emblems*, p. 307, "The Christian without a Cross"; pp. 235-240.

Douglas Jerrold's *Cakes and Ale* has a story of a miser who perished by being locked up in his own treasury. Goethe's *Faust* portrays the career of a man who sold his soul to Satan.

The poem "The Changed Cross." The seven fears changed into seven joys, in Arnold's *Light of Asia*. Bishop Huntington's *Sermons*, "The Cross a Burden or a Glory."

On the Exchange of the Soul see Gotthold's *Emblems*, p. 100, "The Soul-Venders."

THE LESSON IN ART.

Pictures illustrating Peter and the Keys, by Perugino, Rubens, Raphael,* Giotto, Ingres,* Guido Reni.*

I. JESUS BY QUESTIONING THE DISCIPLES LEADS THEM TO REALIZE THAT HE IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH (THE CHRIST), vs. 27-30; Matt. 16:15-20. Hitherto for more than two years of his ministry Jesus had spent his time in teaching, healing; living and presenting in word and action the character and nature of the Kingdom of Heaven which he declared had come, and was coming more and more fully.

The Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, as it is often called, is that state, and in that place wherever it may be, where men live in accordance with the principles and laws of God, which make heaven to be heaven. It is in every heart and in every place where God is the chosen King. For every loyal member of His Kingdom has freely chosen God as his King, and therefore "the Kingdom of God," "the Republic of God" are the same thing under different names, with equal and perfect freedom of service. And Christ's mission is to establish this in every individual, and all the earth with all the physical blessings which are its fruit and its instruments.

Jesus illustrated the Glad Tidings by doing good to the bodies as well as the souls of the people. He cured all manner of diseases and sickness among the people. "He laid his hands on every one of them and healed them." He cleansed the lepers, he cast out demons, he gave sight to the blind, he restored the wildly insane. He was moved with compassion for the hungry and the suffering. He "himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases." He fed the hungry. He raised the dead. And to the poor the Good News was preached. These visible object lessons were expressions of his loving-kindness and illustrations of the spirit of the Gospel. Every miracle was a visible picture before men of the character of God, of the nature of the Gospel, of the loving-kindness of our Saviour, of his power to help, of the wonders of grace he can work in our hearts, of his power to deliver from the diseases of sin. They were Jesus' credentials as the Messiah.

27. And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28. And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

Moreover the Kingdom of Heaven was the inspiring the people who would receive it with all the moral principles and actions that make heaven to be what it is. Not only the Ten Commandments, but the Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount, the fruits of the Spirit.

Even children can understand the meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus having proved to his disciples and others that he was the Son of God, one who came from heaven, and was filled with the Spirit and power, the life and deeds of the Kingdom of Heaven, now reveals himself as the long-expected Messiah promised to the Jews.

While waiting in the vicinity of Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus one day asked his disciples, Whom do men say that I am? Mk. 8:27; Matt. 16:13. His object seems to have been to draw out the faith of his disciples, and to reveal to them more fully his nature and his redeeming work. He would put into definite form what they had been gradually learning from his words and works — that he was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God.

28. John the Baptist, returned to life. Among these was Herod. Some say Elias, i.e. Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah, but not the Messiah himself. And others Jeremias (Matt.), the Greek form of Jeremiah. Of course, in the same sense as Elijah — a forerunner of the Messiah. "Jeremiah is placed first, because in the Jewish canon he was placed first among the O. T. prophets," and was regarded as among the greatest. Perhaps also because of the character of his preaching, mingling denunciation with hope. One of the prophets, i.e. "that one of the old prophets is risen again" (Luke 9:19).

29. Jesus next asked his disciples, Whom say ye that I am? "How much have you learned from me and my teaching, and from the Bible with which you are familiar, about the Divine teaching concerning the promised Messiah?"

Peter, the one who had been changed to "Rock" from Simon, according to the promise of Jesus, was the first to answer, — Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt.). Words worthy to be printed everywhere in gold. "Christ" is the Greek, "Messiah" the Hebrew, for "anointed." As kings and priests were set apart by anointing, the Jews came to call the expected manifestation of God as King of kings and Priest of priests by that beautiful name, the Anointed One. The picture of the Messiah in the prophets, as a great and glorious king, could be realized only by means of the suffering and death of the Messiah, which seemed to the disciples to destroy the picture. They expected to conquer the Romans, and all the enemies of the Jews. They knew the glorious prophecies of Isaiah, and longed for the "good time coming," "the age of gold."

30. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him. For (1) the people were not yet prepared to understand the real and essential truth. (2) Because the people would be turned away from their spiritual needs, and the new life that was essential to the coming of the kingdom, to the desire to realize the outward glories of their false conception of the Messiah as king. This danger was entirely removed after the crucifixion. (3) The announcement that Jesus was the Messiah would be likely to excite tumult and rebellion against the Roman government, the people trying to make Jesus the leader of the revolt. This would interfere with his plan of a spiritual kingdom.

II. JESUS REVEALED TO THE DISCIPLES THAT, AS THE MESSIAH, HE MUST SUFFER DEATH ON THE CROSS.

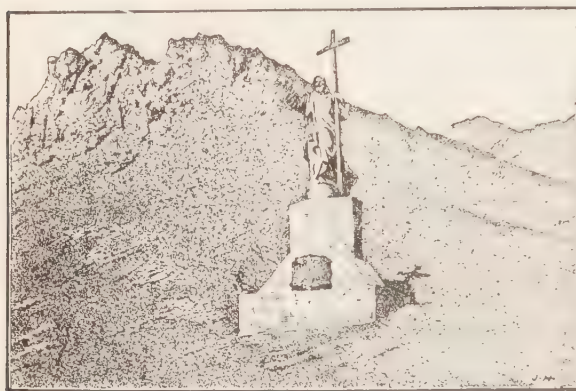
AND AFTER THREE DAYS RISE FROM THE DEAD, A LIVING SAVIOUR FOREVERMORE, v. 31; read Isa. 53. After a certain period, in preparation for the Transfiguration, Jesus began to teach them, the disciples, the deeper truth of the atonement for sin. He shows the whole circle of Rejection by the Jews, of Death

31. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

on the Cross, and of his Resurrection from the tomb, the ever living, ever present Saviour.

First. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Jesus was God's great gift of love to man. Jesus was from heaven, knew heaven, and came down to express his love to man, by suffering for him.



The Peace Statue.

The Christ of the Andes.

Placed on the boundary line of Chili and Argentine as a sacred seal to the lasting peace of the two nations.

eternal symbol of the religion of Jesus and of the religious life.

mockeries, betrayal, Gethsemane, insults, cruelties, and the pains of death on the cross.

WHY?

He had power to overcome all his enemies, — "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53, Am. R.)

Then why not use this power?

Because it was his duty to die for the salvation of the world. He gave his life for the world to express his divine love for man.

The Third of the three great essentials of the redemptive work of Jesus is that he rose from the dead, and was alive forevermore. On the third day after his death he rose from the tomb, and after showing himself alive at intervals he ascended to heaven in the presence of his disciples, and is now the ever living Saviour for all men, the divine Son of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who for 2000 years has been transforming the world into the kingdom of heaven, more rapidly as the years roll on.

"As we stand on Mt. Olivet with the disciples gazing at our ascending Lord, the closing act of the most wonderful Life ever lived on earth; and then turn our thoughts backward over his whole career, — we see the perfect ideal of a Redeemer of the world, made real. Nothing equal to it has ever been even conceived in the mind of man, much less been realized."

III. JESUS REBUKES THE LOYAL PETER, BECAUSE HE REVIVED SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS CAREER, vs. 32,

33. Peter was rebuked in the presence of the other disciples, when Jesus said to him, **Get thee behind me, Satan.** *Satan* means "adversary," the great "enemy"

His healing men, teaching them, spending his very life for man, was essential for saving them. So far as we are following his principles we are going right. It is by his light, by following his teachings, by doing his will, by putting his principles into governments, his love of righteousness and the good of man into rulers, by living in his way, doing business according to his laws, spreading the Gospel according to his command, that the world will move on toward the millennium.

Second. Jesus suffered death on the cross for the world. The cross with Jesus upon it is the

33. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34. And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

of all good. He did not mean that Peter was Satan, but Peter was voicing the views of Satan in his temptation in the wilderness, that Jesus might gain his kingdom without the cross; as you will see if you read the account of the three great temptations, Matt. 4:1-11. It was a mighty temptation, to gain the whole world and its glory without suffering and death.

IV. THOSE WHO WOULD BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS MUST FOLLOW THEIR MASTER, EACH TAKING UP HIS OWN CROSS, vs. 34, 35. Jesus now called the people *unto him* with his disciples also. The teaching about the Messiah was for the disciples only, because they only could understand and use it, till after his death and resurrection; but the practical duties and principles were for all. Whosoever will (wishes to) come after me. Be his follower, his disciple; and seek to attain his character and his reward. There was no other way, and is no other way, to follow Jesus, but to make choice of the same principles, the same purpose, the same kind of life, as Jesus chose and lived. Hence he simply set these before them.

First. Let Him Deny Himself. Renounce self as master, and accept Christ as master. When the heart accepts Jesus and chooses God, then the whole lower nature, all passions, aims, desires, are to be subjected not only to conscience, but to Jesus and His cause. "He ceases to make himself the object of his life and action." The centre around which all his purposes and actions move, is Jesus Christ, His principles, His kingdom, His work of redemption of man from sin; and everything contrary to this is denied and rejected; and everything that is pleasant and right and good in life is subordinated, but not rejected.

It is the subordination of all the lower nature to the higher, of the body to the soul, of the worldly to the spiritual. Self-denial is exactly what Jesus showed in his life. Every earthly thing was subordinate to his great purpose.

Let us note several things that will aid us to clear thinking. (1) This is not giving up pleasant things simply because they are pleasant. Self-denial for self-denial's sake is not a virtue, and is not pleasing to God. Our mere pains and troubles are not sweet incense to God (2 Tim. 4:1-3). He desires us to be happy as he is, and he knows that only through true self-denial can this joy be obtained and retained. We are not to believe that

"Each pleasure has its poison too
And every sweet a snare."

(2) But self-denial does mean that we are to have one great aim and purpose in life, and that we are to deny ourselves everything wrong, no matter how pleasant it may be; and to give up what is pleasant and right in itself when we can thereby best aid the cause of Christ and the redemption of our fellow-men; it is to do right, to serve Christ, to promote his kingdom at whatever cost. "Keep your soul on top."

(3) All of life is full of choices between the higher and the lower, between work and play, between study and idleness, between duty and pleasure, between obedience and disobedience, between health and luxury, between honesty and dishonesty. The perfect man is one who is perfectly self-controlled; all his powers are subject to his will, submissive to God, and guided by reason and conscience.

There is no other way of opening the door to man's highest possibilities, his fullest development, his purest holiness, his greatest happiness, his largest usefulness, his real success in life.

Second. And Take Up His Cross. The idea is that one must be willing to choose Christ and His cause even though it lead him to the most painful death. "A disciple is to follow the example of Jesus in giving up everything, even life itself, that belongs to the selfish interests, sooner than anything belonging to the higher purposes of life." — *Professor Gould, Int. Crit. Com.*

It is therefore (1) the emblem of all suffering for the sake of Christ and His cause. (2) Each one must take up his own cross. (3) He must take it up voluntarily, accept it, not merely endure what is laid upon him. This is what changes the cross into a glory. "The cross for the cross, never; but the cross for the Lord, always." (4) The cross is a test. It is the *Ithuriel's spear*, which tests whether we are disciples in deed and in truth, or only seekers after the loaves and fishes.



The Largest Cross in the World.

"The Snowy Cross of the Rockies," on the Mount of the Holy Cross, Colorado.

This snowy cross (1500 feet in length, the arms measuring 750 feet, at an altitude of more than 14,000 feet above the sea level) shines out that marvellous sacred sign, the emblem of faith and purity.

Compare Garibaldi to his dispirited forces: "Soldiers! What I have to offer you is fatigue, danger, struggle, and death, the chill of the cold night in the open air, and heat under the burning sun; no lodgings, no munitions, no provisions, but forced marches, dangerous watchposts, and the continual struggles with the bayonet against batteries. **Those who love freedom and their country, follow me.**" And they answered the call.

So Ruskin truly tells us, "Neither is good work ever done for hatred any more than hire — but for love only. For the love of their country, or their leader, or their duty men fight steadily, but for massacre and plunder, feebly. Your signal, 'England expects every man to do his duty' they will follow."

Reasons why we should Follow Jesus. It is the only way to make the most of life.

There is only one way to build boys and girls into good, strong, useful men and women, and that is to be a whole-hearted follower of Jesus.

The Ephebic Oath. Some years ago the senior class of the College of the City of New York presented to Mayor Gaynor an "Ephebic" oath, engrossed on parchment, swearing as did the Athenian youths, never by act of theirs to bring disgrace upon the city's name.

Every boy and girl should make such a promise, to their country and to Christ and His church.

The oath taken by the college class in New York reads thus:

"We will never bring disgrace to this, our city, by any act of dishonesty or cowardice, nor ever desert our suffering comrades in the ranks; we will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many; we will incite a like respect and reverence in those above us who are prone to annul and set them at naught; we will strive unceasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty; that thus, in all these ways, we will transmit this city, not only not less; but greater, better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

36. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

It is well for grown men and women to pledge themselves to Christ and His kingdom:

We will never bring disgrace to this our Church or state.

We will work for the ideals and sacred things of the Kingdom of God.

We will strive unceasingly to quicken the public sense of Christian Duty.

We will transmit our Sunday School, Church and town not only not less

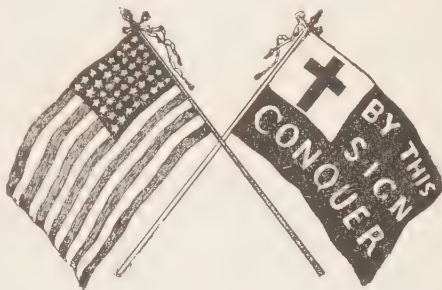
But greater, better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

Write out some details, and keep them constantly before you, — honesty, service for others, help for the poor, aid to every good cause, hatred of selfishness, and of all the evils that are ruining so many. "Send words of cheer, letters of sympathy, flowers and cards to the sick and the lonely — in very truth, roll away the stone that shuts the light from some one's life."

V. PROFIT AND LOSS, vs. 35-38.

36. What shall it profit a man. Thus, if a man in gaining the whole world becomes lost (Luke), as on a desolate island, or if he dies in the process, or if he loses his health and is racked with pain, or if he loses his innocence and is tormented with remorse, what has such a person gained?

What shall a Man Give in Exchange for His Soul?



Our Country's Flag and the Conquest Flag.

The Magic Skin. "Balzac has given us an allegory in three books called 'The Magic Skin,' that forcibly illustrates the question of Jesus, What shall a man give in exchange for his life? The story opens with a young Paris student, Raphael by name, who loses his last gold piece in a gambling den, and walks away thinking only of death, thinking how the Prefect of the Seine will give the boatman a five franc piece for finding his body. Night, after all, is a better time in which to die, he decides, and he enters an antiquarian shop. There he is attracted to a skin on which is written in Arabic:

*'Dost thou desire me? Take me. God will grant thee thy wishes,
But at every wish of thine I shrink. And with me thy days.'*

"Raphael signs a compact and departs with the piece of leather. His first wish is to indulge in some wild orgy. He seeks a place of revelry, and the next day he sees with a start that the magic skin has already shriveled a little.

"He falls in love with a young woman whom he can gain only through possessing great wealth. 'To the devil with death!' he exclaims at last, brandishing the magic skin. 'I choose to live, and to be rich, and to marry Fedora.'

"He tries to destroy the fatal leather. It is untouched by chemical reagents, comes out of a white-hot furnace unscathed, is thrown into the bottom of a deep well, but is drawn up in the bucket. He measures it anew and it is now only six inches square. He then strives to live without wishing, but his evil nature has gained too strong a hold on him, his will power is gone. Excess has unnerved him. The magic talisman is hung upon the wall, and as he watches it shrink and shrink, his own life ebbs away, physicians avail not, and at last the end comes to him and at the same time the remnant of leather vanishes into nothingness." — *Martha Tarbell.*

VI. JESUS IS NOW THE EVER LIVING SAVIOUR. Jesus' body was doubtless changed at the ascension into a spiritual body. It was not till that change that we have in the resurrection of Christ a type of the change to be made in our bodies by the resurrection.

It is of the utmost importance that we remember that the body Jesus rose with was the very same body that died on the cross. There is no possible way to prove that Jesus rose from the dead, if the body was not the same after, that it was before, he was buried.

It proves that we have a living Saviour, sitting on the right hand of God (Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1), seated with the Father on his throne (Rev. 3:21; 22:1). We have a picture of his glory in Heb. 1:2-4; and in Rev. 1:10-18. We do not, as has been falsely charged, worship a dead, but a living Christ. Having shown his power to conquer Death, the great enemy, we know he has power to conquer all our enemies. He is the great, living Leader, inspirer, and protector of his people, who will make his kingdom to triumph over all evil. "The whole alphabet of human hope" is in the resurrection of Jesus.

It is the proof of immortal life beyond the grave; that death does not end all, but the soul lives after the body dies.

Read carefully Bunyan's word-picture of Christian and Hopeful crossing the River of life, greeted by shining angels and by those who had gone before, with their earthly bodies transformed into the heavenly and spiritual bodies, and are now "Singing sweet fragments of the songs above; And Life's long shadows break in cloudless Love."

LESSON III (XVI). — April 21.

JESUS TRANSFIGURED. — Mark 9:2-29.

PRINT Mark 9:2-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *This is my beloved Son: hear ye Him.* — MARK 9:7.

Additional Material for Teachers: Matt. 17:1-20; Luke 9:28-43 (Parallels).

Also 2 Kings 2:8-12; 4:25-37; 6:14-17; 2 Pet. 1:1-21.

Primary Topic: With Jesus on the Mountain.

Intermediate Topic: Meeting Difficulties with Prayer.

Additional Material: Jas. 5:15-18.

Senior and Adult Topic: Vision and Service.

Additional Material: See same for Teachers.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THIS LESSON TO THE CLASS.

The teacher can gain the attention of the class by the fascinating story of Raphael's Picture of the Transfiguration.

Give each scholar one of the reproductions of this painting in the penny pictures, or let them see it through the stereoscope.

In the *Riverside Art Series* (Houghton & Mifflin) is a good photograph, and an excellent description that can be read to the scholars.

Fresh interest is added by the fact that it is the last picture Raphael painted, and was not quite finished when he was suddenly stricken with fever and died.

Raphael's picture is an interpretation and allegory. On the mountain is Christ in the centre, with Moses and Elijah on either side, raised from the ground to show that they are spirits, not flesh and blood. Peter, James, and John are reclining on the mountain top, shading their eyes from the light.

Below are the other nine disciples trying to cure the demoniac boy held by his father and mother during one of his spasms.

Raphael always loved to paint scenes



The Transfiguration. Detail.

Raphael.

from the Saviour's life; and he spent years of study upon The Transfiguration, now in the Vatican. It is the most celebrated and most beautiful of all pictures of the Transfiguration scene. It probably stands first among all the paintings in the world. It was the consummate flower of his life.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn, or late summer of A.D. 29. A week after our last lesson.

Place. — One of the spurs of Mt. Hermon, and a village at its foot.

Place in the Life of Christ. — The last half of the third year of Jesus' ministry. It is the reverse side of the picture of the suffering Messiah, for it reveals his radiant glory.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Transfiguration, and Its Results.

- I. THE SOLEMN SIX DAYS.
- II. THE MOUNTAIN PRAYERMEETING OF FOUR, v. 2.
- III. THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS, vs. 2, 3.
- IV. THE HEAVENLY COMPANIONS OF JESUS, v. 4.
Moses, the representative of the Law.
Elijah, the representative of the Prophets.
- V. THE CONFERENCE OF THE GLORIFIED THREE, v. 4.
- VI. THE THREE WITNESSES, vs. 5, 6.
- VII. THE VOICE FROM THE CLOUD, vs. 7, 8.
- VIII. THE CHARGE TO THE THREE, vs. 9, 10.
- IX. THE POWERS BY WHICH CHRISTIANITY CONQUERED.
- X. VISION AND SERVICE.

THE ROUND TABLE.

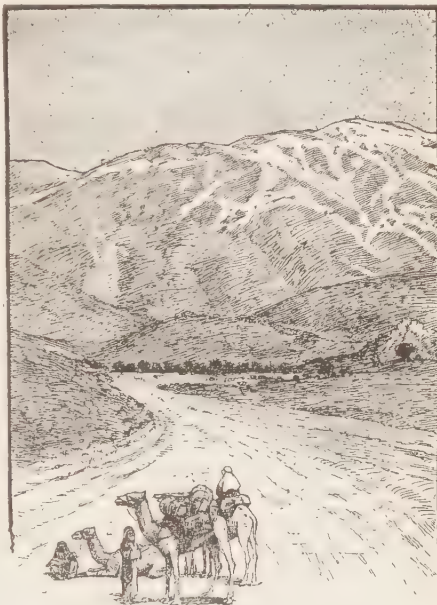
FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The connection between this lesson and the last.
Why did Jesus wait six days?
The prayermeeting of four.
The object of the Transfiguration.
The change in Jesus.
Why were these three chosen to go with Jesus?
Why were Moses and Elijah chosen to talk with Jesus?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Vincent's *Word Studies*, vol. 1, pp. 90, 100, on the meaning of the word "trans-

figured." Gunsaulus' *The Transfiguration of Christ* (Houghton & Mifflin). Trench's *Studies in the Gospels*, p. 184. Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*, "Solar Self-Culture." Stalker's *Imago Christi*, chap. VII. G. Campbell Morgan, *The Crises of the Christ*, Book IV, "The Transfiguration" (Revell). Prin. Garvie's *Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus*, "The Foregleams of His Glory" (Armstrong).



Mount Hermon from the Damascus Road.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Parts of Whittier's "Our Master," and Longfellow's "Legend Beautiful." Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. 4, chap. 20, on the Transfiguration, is full of deep insight. Whittier's "Chapel of the Hermits." Goethe's *Tale of Tales*, as interpreted by Carlyle in his *Essays*.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Pictures of the Transfiguration by Fra Angelico,* Michelangelo, Titian, Tintoretto. But above all others in Raphael's* picture, referred to above.

I. THE SOLEMN SIX DAYS. Those were very solemn days that followed the revelation to the Twelve that Jesus must die on the cross and after three days be raised from the tomb, the everlasting Messiah.

2. And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

For the next week after this (Luke says "about an eight days") nothing is recorded. The disciples were dazed and puzzled. A thick gloom of sadness seemed to have settled upon them all. Their best friend, their hope, their Saviour, must die. Could he, then, be their Saviour? Their hopes of a glorious kingdom, of a redeemed nation, were all shattered. A dense cloud covered all their anticipations. It was needful that they should know the truth. It was needful, also, that they should see the truth beyond the gloom, and obtain a glimpse of the glory and salvation to which the way of the cross would lead them.

They could not conceive how the way of the cross was the way to the kingdom. Hence the imperative need of a revelation to them of the real nature and glory of Jesus, and the fact of a life after death, in so impressive a way that it could never be forgotten, or lose its power.

The teaching of this lesson should move around this centre, and make as clear to our scholars as the event itself did to the disciples, the glorious nature of Jesus, our Redeemer.

II. THE MOUNTAIN PRAYERMEETING OF FOUR. v. 2. Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, James, and John. It was the same favored three who had gone with Jesus into the room where he raised Jairus' daughter. And went up into an high mountain. "That is, *into* some recess in some high mountain." — *Morison*. "This statement prepares us to expect some important development in the progress of his mission." — *Bliss*.

There was no favoritism in this selection. He simply advanced to higher studies those who, by faithfulness in the lower, had made it possible for them to understand and use the higher. Only to those who have been faithful in the lesser things comes the call to the wider kingdom. The other nine disciples were left at the base of the mountain, as we see by the events of the following morning (Mark 9 : 14-29).

There was need of witnesses to report this scene in due time. And these three best scholars needed the knowledge and training this event would give. *Into an high mountain apart*, from the other disciples, and "far from the madding crowd." Luke (9 : 28, 29) tells us that Jesus went up into the mountain to pray; and that the Transfiguration took place *while he prayed*. So it was at his baptism; *as he prayed* the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him as a dove (Luke 3 : 21, 22).

In this case there was not merely prayer, but a *prayermeeting*. Doubtless the three disciples joined with their teacher in prayer. And to this prayermeeting of four was the promise fulfilled that "where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I also." As in music there are sources of power and emotion in a harmony of voices and of parts which no single voice, however perfect, can produce, so in praying there are peculiar blessings in united prayer, a binding of souls together, an uplifting power, a fulness of answer from God. In spiritual things, one plus one is far more than two.

Elijah had once a wonderful experience of prayer while he was living on the earth. See James 1 : 5, 6 ; 5 : 17, 18 ; Matt. 7 : 7, 8.

"Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known."

III. THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS, vs. 2, 3. *The Scene*. The place of the transfiguration scene is unknown, as are almost all the places in which occurred the most sacred events of Jesus' life, probably because such a place would become a shrine, and be visited as peculiarly, while God would have the hearts of men everywhere to be holy places, and all the world holy ground.

"Our common daily life divine
And every land a Palestine."

Prayer and its Answer, Luke 9 : 29. And as he prayed (Greek, "in his praying"), the transfiguration took place. We know not what he was praying for, but doubtless for strength to endure and to carry on his work, for the faith and enlightenment of

3. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

his disciples in their gloom, for the coming of the kingdom which seemed to progress so slowly. *The transfiguration was the answer.*

2. And he was transfigured before them, — the three apostles, and Moses and Elijah. Placing together the various descriptions in the three Gospels, the scene becomes intensely vivid.

The fashion (appearance) of his countenance was altered (Luke) "by being lighted with radiance both from without and from within." — *Alford*. And his raiment was white and glistering (Luke Am. R.). "Literally *lightening forth*, as though from some inward radiance. St. Matthew compares the whiteness of his robes to the light (17: 2); St. Mark to the snow (9: 3); and St. Luke, in this word, to the lightning. (See John 1: 14; Psa. 104: 2; Hab. 3: 4.) — *Cambridge Bible*. Mark adds **as no fuller on earth can white them**, i.e. with a supernatural whiteness.

Matthew's description of the change in his countenance is that **his face did shine as the sun**. Nothing less than the brightest and most glorious of all objects within human knowledge — so bright that it destroys the eyes to gaze directly upon it — could express the radiant glories of Jesus' face, when his heavenly nature shone through the veil of his flesh, — one of the few hints as to our resurrection bodies.

Illustration. Hawthorne compares Christianity to a grand cathedral with divinely pictured windows. Viewed from without, it is impossible to gain the slightest conception of the beautiful forms and radiant colors manifest to those who look at them from within. So it is with Christ. There is a glory in him not visible to those without, but revealed to those who dwell in his heart of hearts.

Illustration. Alumina, common earth, can become oriental ruby, topaz, amethyst, sapphire, or emerald. Silica can become jasper, opal, or Brazilian ruby. Charcoal can become diamond. Why not the body become equally lustrous, — nay, luminous?

Illustration. "Dante, describing the angels whom he met in the Paradise, impresses us at once with their external glory and spiritual effulgence. Invariably he makes the former the result of the latter. With closer faithfulness to physical science than he dreamed, he sings:

"Another of those splendors
Approached me and its will to pleasure me
It signified by brightening outwardly,

As one delighted to do good;
Became a thing transcendent in my sight
As a prize ruby smitten by the sun." — *Paradise IX*,
13-19.

"Dante says of Beatrice, as he saw her in the Paradise, that

"She smiled so joyously
That God seemed in his countenance to rejoice." —
Paradise, XXVII, 105."

We have hints here as told us in 1 Cor. 15, that at death our bodies shall be transformed into spiritual bodies. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. 15: 49).

IV. THE HEAVENLY COMPANIONS OF JESUS, v. 4. I. MOSES THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LAW. Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai the two tables of the Law, written upon stone, to be the moral foundation principles of the Hebrew people through all their existence.

These ten great commandments were given amid the most awful sanctions, while Moses was with God on the mount, amid "thunderings, and lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him" (Ex. 34: 29, 30).

The Great Principles of Right, as recorded in Moses' last appeals to his people, appeals which are still sounding throughout all the world. There is no escape from them. "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

Let young and old, boys and girls, take heed to remember and practise the eternal laws of God, —

"And all these blessing shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day ; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee" (Deut. 28 : 2, 15).

There was an abundance of subjects for Jesus and Moses and Elijah to talk over together, — the death of Jesus on the cross ; his resurrection ; how these were to be the means of the salvation of the world.

The Death of Moses was peculiarly different from that of other men. He died in the land of Moab, after he had looked from the mountain top upon the Promised Land, the best land in the world for the Jews, which he was forbidden to enter. No one ever has known where his sepulchre was to this day. "God bent over the face of Moses, and kissed him. And his soul leaped up in joy, and went with the kiss of God to Paradise." — *Weil's Legends*.

2. ELIJAH, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PROPHETS who foretold the coming of the Messiah, his sufferings, and his kingship, also had some peculiar experiences. After his great disappointment he had been greatly depressed and despondent. He went on his journey southward till he reached Horeb, the mount of God, one of the names of Sinai. Here he lodged in a cave. The Lord came to him here, and said, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

The Lord then gave him a new vision of God's methods for advancing His kingdom on earth.

"Go forth and stand upon the mount." That is, just outside of the cave. He went to the opening and looked out. "And, behold, the LORD passed by." In the symbols of His power. "A great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks."

"But the LORD was not in the wind." That is, however great this visible manifestation of His power, it was not the chief power of method by which God did His greatest works and made His most radical changes.

"After the wind an earthquake." Those who experienced the earthquake at San Francisco, and at Messina, tell us that there is nothing so terrorizing as an earthquake.

"But the LORD was not in the earthquake." There was not the hiding of His power.

"'Twas but the rolling of His car,
The trampling of His steeds afar."

"And after the earthquake a fire."

"But the LORD was not in the fire."

"'Twas but the fierceness of His eye
That lightened through the troubled sky."

"And after the fire a still small voice." This represented the hiding of God's power.

"At last a voice all still and small
Rose sweetly on the ear,
Yet rose so calm and clear that all
In heaven and earth might hear."

"It spoke of peace, it spoke of love,
It spoke as angels speak above ;
And God Himself was here.
For oh, it was a Father's voice
That bade His trembling world rejoice."

The Still Small Voice. The Earthquake and Storm and Fire were necessary preludes to the "Still Small Voice." They compelled attention to the power that was in and behind that voice, even the power of God Himself. The seen proved the power of the unseen silent forces in both the natural and spiritual world.

Thus Elijah's method of work was changed. See 1 Kings 19.

Elijah did not die as others did. A chariot of fire was one of his attendants, and he went up by a whirlwind into heaven : very much as Jesus went up to heaven from Mount Olivet. See 2 Kings 2 : 1-12.

V. THE CONFERENCE OF THE GLORIFIED THREE, v. 4. And they were talking with Jesus. The disciples saw and heard them, not in a vision, but in reality.

Remember that for nearly two weeks before this Jesus had been talking with his disciples about his death at Jerusalem. It was the saddest of all the events in his

5. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

career. It seemed as if the end, not only of his life but his whole career, would come in a few months at the early age of 33, and all be blank beyond.

Now comes a new comfort and hope in talking over the experiences of the two men Moses and Elijah, whose existence for many centuries in the spiritual body would bring joy to Jesus. His body was experiencing the same change from a body of death to the resurrection body revealed by Paul, as had the bodies of Moses and Elijah. They could tell all about it. Jesus would be three days in the tomb, and then after he had appeared again and again during 40 days, he would be translated to heaven and in his spiritual body be the real but unseen Messiah, the King of kings, the Saviour of the World.

The whole transaction would comfort and strengthen Jesus. It relieved his perplexities. He stood almost alone against the beliefs of the age, in regard to the sufferings and death of the Messiah; but the representatives of the prophets from heaven stood on his side. If he hesitated in his assurance of his resurrection, here were those who had triumphed over death.

Jesus, having risen to life after his death on the cross, promised to return again alive, and, unseen indeed, be always present with his disciples.

The Transfiguration was a promise, a prophecy and a vision of our resurrection life. We are not only assured of the reality of the life beyond the grave, but by specimens of what we may become, we catch glimpses of the glory that awaits us. He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

VI. THE THREE WITNESSES, vs. 5, 6; Luke 9:32, 33. Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep. "This implies that it was a night scene. The celestial visitants were supposed to arrive while the disciples are asleep. They fell asleep while their Master prayed, as at Gethsemane." — *Expos. Greek Test.* And when they were awake. Am. R., "fully awake." "But having remained awake" in spite of this sleepiness would be the common meaning of the word; but perhaps here it means 'having become thoroughly awake.' — *Int. Crit. Com.* They saw his glory. The light which radiated from him would banish the last traces of slumber.

As they departed (Am. R., "were parting") from him, in an impulsive effort to detain them, Peter, always the quick and outspoken disciple, said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here. True indeed, so far. Peter, James, and John must have been greatly blessed by the experience, their faith strengthened, their insight deepened, their outlook broadened. But Peter did not stop there. Let us make three tabernacles. Booths, woven from the branches or bushes, such as those in which the Jews lived during the Feast of Tabernacles. They must have shelter if they were to remain there.

6. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. Not realizing the folly of his suggestion. "Not knowing that the spectacle on Calvary was to be more transcendent and divine than that of Hermon." "He was bewildered, and could not collect his thoughts."

(1) They could not live on the mountain.

(2) The two visitors had gone out of sight in the cloud.

(3) As disciples there was no work in the line of their mission which they could do on the mountain. They were to take their heavenly experience with them down into the sinful, suffering world below. It was not to be a mere day dream, a vision, but a power to transfigure life and men. It was by shining in the darkness that the light would retain its radiance. The church that would be a club for its own enjoyment, the coterie that would keep its culture to itself, always lose the blessing they seek to retain. People often desire to retain the ecstasies of religious feeling. This they cannot do, but they can retain its blessings by going down from the mount and using

7. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

8. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9. And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

their experience in transfiguring their daily burdens and cares, and attracting men to the cross of Christ.

Illustration. "God does not make the mountain tops to be inhabited; they are not for the homes of men. We ascend the height to get a broader vision of our earthly surroundings, but we do not tarry there. The streams take their rise in these uplands, but quickly descend to gladden the fields and valleys below. We are to take these crystal waters to quench the thirst of others." — *Prof. Henry Drummond.*

VII. THE VOICE FROM THE CLOUD. vs. 7, 8. Peter (2 Pet. 1 : 17), in a reminiscence of this scene, calls it "the excellent glory." The cloud was an incarnation of the ineffable light of God, veiling its glory, yet making it visible to man, as the clouds that veil the sun enable us who cannot gaze into his face yet to see his beauty and glory. The cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud came a voice, the voice of God, saying,

THIS IS MY BELOVED SON; HEAR HIM.

The same voice that had spoken at his baptism. The truth about the real nature of Jesus, who appeared to them daily as a man, must be impressed upon the disciples so that they should never lose their faith even in the dark times that were to follow; and while others were calling Jesus a criminal and blasphemer, the disciples could always see him in his true glory. **Hear him.** Attend to his instructions and obey him.

8. When the disciples heard the voice they fell on their faces. Then Jesus came and touched them (Matthew) and suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man . . . save Jesus only. The two heavenly visitants had vanished in the cloud.

VIII. THE CHARGE TO THE THREE THAT THEY SHOULD TELL NO MAN WHAT THINGS THEY HAD SEEN, TILL THE SON OF MAN WERE RISEN FROM THE DEAD, vs. 9, 10. This was absolutely necessary, because (1) the facts would be misunderstood, and misinterpreted not only by the disciples but by all who heard the story. (2) And therefore all would confuse the story with the facts that followed a few months later. It would seem to the people as a dream or vision of fancy. Not till Jesus was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven, could the real work of Jesus as the Saviour become the power that was the source and fountain of the new religion.

IX. THE POWER BY WHICH CHRISTIANITY CONQUERED. In view of the disclosures of the Transfiguration, it is well for us to place ourselves in imagination at the very beginning of the new Christian religion, and consider the most astonishing and wonderful thing in all history, — How it was possible to make its way in the world, with what seemed such feeble instrumentalities, and overcome the greatest apparent obstacles in the whole world.

The story of its victories has become more and more marvellous to me. The study of this Wonder gives us the source of the victories of Christ and his Church all down the ages, which needs to be revived in our own day.

First. Up to that period there was very little visible power that could transform the world or introduce the religion of Jesus Christ.

1. The one who was to be the Messiah was a Christmas baby, growing up in a common home in Nazareth.

2. He came from heaven, God's only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life, — but at that time he was not so recognized.

3. He lived a perfect life before the people for three years.

4. He was always doing good, curing the sick, the blind, the demoniac, raising the dead, teaching and preaching, training his disciples for their future work.

The people beheld his glory full of grace and truth, working miracles, and expressing the ideal life and the ideal man. At this period there was no readiness for the mass of the people, nor for the heathen population, to enter upon the christianization of the world.

Second. There were insuperable obstacles in the way.

1. There were difficulties in the way, greater than to remove mountains and cast them into the sea. Many mountains stood in their way, towering above the clouds.

A little band of peasants, unarmed, unlearned, were to graft a new kingdom of heaven on the old Jewish church, — and everything stood in their way, — customs, pride, learning, sacrifices, the Temple itself, wealth, honor, prejudices of the whole Jewish nation.

Olivet was but a molehill to this mountain. Without wealth, without worldly power, rank, armies, numbers, they were to conquer the Roman Empire, when to be Roman was greater than to be a king; Rome, which with its armies had conquered every nation that stood in its way; the throne of the Cæsars, who with a word could have swept away the whole body of the disciples, as easily as the wind sweeps the dust from the roadway, — Tabor, Pisgah, Lebanon, were but as sands on the seashore, compared with the difficulties in the way of the disciples.

Third. *The Powers by which Christianity overcame, and has been Conquering unto this day.*

1. By the cross, an atonement for sin, and a proof of Divine Love. "For God so loved the world."

2. By Christ's resurrection from the dead; proved during 40 days, and now a living Redeemer, the Leader, the King, the Messiah. Described in the first chapter of Revelation.

3. All who believed in him are to be raised from the dead, as Jesus was, as described in 1 Cor. 15. All who lived the Jesus life, who obeyed him as their leader, had the promise of eternal life, with spiritual bodies like Christ's.

4. The result was that the lives of great numbers were transformed into the spiritual life of Christ. See Matt. 25.

5. The manifestation of the tongues of fire.

6. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, the power that Jesus bestowed on his disciples.

7. The great numbers who accepted Jesus repented of their sins, and went to work to convince others.

8. This process has been going on for nearly 19 centuries, increasing in numbers and power, till the heathen, seeing the effect on body and mind, are desiring in larger and larger numbers to receive the blessings of Christianity (not the evils that wicked men do in Christian lands).

9. These powers are not merely the only ones that can Christianize the world, but they are gaining faster in these later years than ever before, far faster in these modern days. And we can almost see the marvellous progress of Christianity year by year, and the dawning rays of the new heavens and the new earth. In the midst of a wicked world, there has been more help given, more service rendered, more people given better wages, more done for the poor, and the sick, more progress in missions, vastly more money raised, and a thousand other ways of uplifting humanity, than the sun ever shone upon before.

"O golden day, so long desired,
Born of a darksome night,
The waiting earth at last is fired
By thy resplendent light.
And hark! like Memnon's morning chord,
Is heard from sea to sea
This song: One Master, Christ the Lord;
And brethren all are we.

"The noises of the night shall cease,
The storms no longer roar;
The factious foes of God's own peace
Shall vex His church no more.
A thousand thousand voices sing
In surging harmony,
This song: One Master, Saviour, King;
And brethren all are we.

"Sing on, ye chorus of the morn,
Your grand Endeavor strain,
Till Christian hearts, estranged and torn,
Blend in the glad refrain;
And all the church, with all its powers,
In loving loyalty,
Shall sing: One Master, Christ, is ours;
And brethren all are we.

"O golden day, the age's crown,
Alight with heavenly love,
Rare day in prophecy's renown,
On to thy zenith move;
Then all the world, with one accord,
In full-voiced unity,
Shall sing: One Master, Christ, our Lord;
And brethren all are we."

X. VISION AND SERVICE. After the vision, Jesus and his disciples on coming down the mountain immediately found work to do. They met the other nine disciples trying to cure an epileptic, but of the most difficult kind. They could not cure or control him.

The Epileptic Boy. (The description as given in the three Gospels.) He is epileptic and suffers grievously. He has a dumb spirit, and wheresoever he taketh him he

teareth him, and dasheth him down, and he foameth and gnasheth his teeth, and pineth away; ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and ofttimes into the water, to destroy him; and when the spirit taketh him, he suddenly crieth out, such sounds as a dumb person utters, and it hardly departeth from him, bruising him sorely.

But Jesus inspired the father with faith. **All things are possible to him that believeth.** The father answered, **Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.** Jesus compelled the evil spirit to come out of the boy.

The first thing after coming down from the mountain was a service to one who greatly needed help. The highest and most glorious experiences, the most heavenly visions, the deepest insight, are given, that we may do better service to our fellow men.

Illustration. "I heard once of a man who dreamed that he was swept into heaven and he was there in the glory world, and oh, he was so delighted to think that he had at last made heaven, that he had got there. And all at once one came and said, 'Come, I want to show you something.' And he took him to the battlements and he said, 'Look down yonder; what do you see?' 'I see a very dark world.' 'Look and see if you know it.' 'Why, yes,' he said, 'that is the world I have come from.' 'What do you see?' 'Why, men are blindfolded there; many of them are going over a precipice.' 'Well, will you stay here and enjoy heaven, or will you go back to earth and spend a little longer time, and tell those men about this world?' He was a worker who had been discouraged. He awoke from his sleep and said, 'I have never wished myself dead since.'" — *Dwight L. Moody.*

"*The Modern Key-Note to Society* 'Service.' As Rev. Hugh Black says, in a recent *Everybody's Magazine*, writing on the changes in the outward forms of Christianity which do not affect the inward spirit: 'Another of the key-notes of modern Christian society is "service." There never was a time when so many men and women were looking about them, asking, "What can I do to make the lot of men easier?" There never were so many eager to lift a burden, or remove a pitfall; there never was such a splendid spirit of altruism as we see to-day.'" — *John F. Cowan, D.D.*

Jesus' own Statement. "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

LESSON IV (XVII). — April 28.

JESUS REBUKES SELFISHNESS. — Mark 9:30-50.

(May be used with Temperance Applications.)

PRINT Mark 9:33-42.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all.* — MARK 9:35.



Raphael.

Healing the Demoniac Boy. Detail.

Devotional Reading : 1 Cor. 13.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 5:41, 42; 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-30; 1 Cor. 13.

Primary and Junior Lesson Material : Mark 9:30-37.

Primary Memory Verse : Be ye kind one to another. — Eph. 4:32.

Junior Memory Verse : 1 John 4:21.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic : Failure of Selfishness.

Additional Material : See same for Teachers.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO THE CLASS.

Having last Sunday requested the class to read over the lesson several times in each of the Gospels, so as to be able to tell the story to-day, let one tell the story, while the others correct errors, and add any omitted incident. Thus it will be deeply impressed on their memories and hearts. Then finish, as was done in a class described in the *New Century Teacher*:

"They had taken turns in telling the story and found it dramatic and interesting.

"'Haven't we had a good lesson, boys?' he cried, enthusiastically. 'Now what are you going to do about it?'

"The boys were taken back by the oddity of the question. Then one volunteered hesitatingly:

"'I s'pose you mean we better go an' act like it.'

"'Exactly,' said the teacher, and ended the lesson."

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Late summer or early autumn, A.D. 29.

Place. — Capernaum in Galilee, Peter's house.

Place in the Life of Christ. — The last half of the last year of Jesus' ministry.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why did Jesus repeat to his disciples the prophecy of his rising again?

What is selfishness?

In what respects is intemperance a selfish habit?

What subject was discussed among the disciples?

What characteristics of childhood are referred to in Christ's statement that "of such is the kingdom of heaven"?

The child in the midst.

Receiving little children in the name of Jesus.

Giving a cup of cold water.

Causing others to stumble.

The Psalm of love, 1 Cor. 13, as the cure of selfishness.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Books concerning children are especially helpful on this lesson. There are very many of them. Patterson Du Bois

writings are very enlightening, — *The Natural Way in Moral Training*, Beckonings of Little Hands, etc. Amos R. Wells' *Three Years with the Children*. *The Luxury of Children*, by E. S. Martin (Harpers). Prof. Franklin W. Johnson's *Problems of Boyhood*. *Hints on Child Training*, by H. Clay Trumbull. *Bringing up Boys*, by Kate Upson Clark.

Studies on Temperance. — *Handbook of Modern Facts about Alcohol*, by Cora Frances Stoddard. *The Scientific Temperance Journal*. Excellent. (36 Bromfield St., Boston, Mass., \$1.00 a year.) *John Barleycorn*, by Jack London (Century Co., price \$1.00). *Alcohol and the Human Body*, by Horsley and Sturge (50¢). *Social Welfare and the Liquor Problem*, by Harry S. Warner (\$1.10).

These books, with stereopticon slides, can be obtained from the Journal referred to above.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Jesus Rebukes Selfishness, as Diametrically Opposed to Christianity.

- I. INTRODUCTION. JESUS PROVED TO BE THE EVER LIVING MESSIAH AND KING.
- II. SELFISHNESS, ITS CHARACTERISTICS.
- III. TEMPERANCE APPLICATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.
- IV. A DISCUSSION AMONG THE DISCIPLES ON THE WAY HOME, — WHO IS GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN? vs. 33-35.
- V. THE CHILD IN THE MIDST, vs. 36, 37.
- VI. AN OUTSIDER IN THE VIEW OF THE DISCIPLES, vs. 38-40.
- VII. THE CUP OF COLD WATER, v. 41.
- VIII. STUMBLING BLOCKS IN THE WAY OF YOUNG CHRISTIANS, v. 42.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Mrs. Browning's "The Cry of the Children." Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality." Charles M. Dickens's poem "The Children," in *Cambridge Book of Poetry*, p. 187. Poems, "Christ

and the Little Ones," by Julia Gill; "The Knight Seeking Something Great," in *Foreword*.

A remarkably good book for mothers to read to their children is Jay T. Stocking's *The City that Never was Reached* (Pilgrim Press).

"The Childlike Spirit," see Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, vol. v, on Peace.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ and the Child, by Ballheim,* by Bida. *The Guardian Angel*, by Hofmann,* by Plockhorst.* *Christ and the Children*, by Rembrandt, Bourdon, Benj. West, Sir Charles Eastlake, Hofmann,* Plockhorst,* Roederstein, Galvini, Rubens,* Von Uhde.

I. INTRODUCTION. Jesus on His way through Galilee again impressed upon the three disciples of the Transfiguration scene not to report to any one what they had seen and heard, till after His death and resurrection, a few months later.

But after His resurrection from the tomb, and His ascension, He "proves Himself to be the Lord and Conqueror of death and the grave. So the evangel rings out through town and village, over hill and dale, that the Lord is risen, and all His claims are confirmed, and all His teachings are now seen; and they went everywhere, as we are told, preaching Jesus and the resurrection."

The resurrection of Jesus, and His continued life and work in the unseen world, was essential as the basis of His kingship, and His power to transform this world into the Kingdom of Heaven.

For the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

II. JESUS REBUKES SELFISHNESS. This topic is presented as the pervasive characteristic of the whole lesson.

Selfishness is a very great and dangerous evil, which Jesus and all the better elements of his kingdom are continually working to conquer in every one of many forms. Jesus is the Hero we are to follow, and by whom we can gain the victory.

Selfishness, as described in the *Century Dictionary*, is "caring only for self; influenced wholly or chiefly by motives of personal or private pleasure or advantage, proceeding from love of self."

"Self-love is a rational, deliberate desire for our own welfare, or anything we consider likely to promote it.

"Selfishness, on the other hand, consists not in the indulging of this or that particular propensity, but in disregarding, for the sake of any kind of personal gratification, or advantage, the rights or the feelings of other men." — *Whately's Morals and Christian Evidences*.

Ruskin in his *Modern Painters* (vol. v) states this truth most forcibly: "So far as you desire to possess rather than to give; so far as you look for power to command instead of to bless; so far as your own prosperity seems to grow out of contest or rivalry of any kind, with other men or nations; so long as the hope before you is for supremacy instead of love, and your desire to be greatest instead of least, first instead of last, so long are you serving the Lord of all that is last and least, the last enemy that shall be destroyed. Death; and you shall have death's crown, with the worm coiled in it, and death's wages, with the worm feeding on them. Kindred of the earth shall you yourself become; saying to the grave, 'Thou art my father'; and to the worm, 'Thou art my mother and my sister.'"

III. THE LESSON SUGGESTS TEMPERANCE APPLICATIONS OF THE EVILS OF SELFISHNESS. Almost all the evils of intemperance come from selfishness. The saloon keeper makes drunkards, because he wants to make money by it. Two shiploads of rum were sent not long ago to Africa, for the selfish reason of gaining wealth. Politicians in some of their meetings tempt those who are seeking some favor or office, or social advantages. Parents, sometimes, even allow their children to drink wine.

Those who distil liquor do it for selfish gain. Indeed almost all the evils of every kind in the world are inspired or aided by intemperance.

Now the business of every man, woman, and child is to overcome selfishness in themselves and in the community.

Advantages of a Chicago Sunday. "Not since the great fire has Chicago closed saloon doors until Sunday, October 10, 1915. More than 7000 drinking places were then, by the Mayor's orders and the coöperation of the Police Commissioner, shut

tight. The Windy City was healthier and happier. Bartenders enjoyed the rest-day. Proprietors recognized that the act was within the law, long violated. The list of automobile accidents was reported largely reduced. The \$300,000 estimated saved to wage-earners was available for necessities. Foodstuffs were in demand. Courts, next day, had far less to occupy them: a suggestion of possible lessening of municipal expenses. This distinctly forward movement is not likely to be discredited nor a return made to an open Sunday when large employers of labor assert that 'help' on Monday showed fifty per cent more ability than usual."

Never so many factors in the overcoming of selfishness. "Yes, the liquor forces are on the run, because that powerful factor in reforms, public sentiment, is becoming thoroughly aroused and is demanding that an institution which breeds criminals and paupers, which debauches politics, which attracts to itself all the baser elements in the community, which entraps young life and robs it of its virtue, which is by far the most sinister of all the 'big businesses' which this nation hereafter intends to control, which no one wants near his own home or the school which his children attend, ought to be forever outlawed from a civilization that calls itself Christian."

The People versus Alcohol. "One summer evening five years ago the editor of one of the best-known American newspapers and a member of his staff who had just finished a 20,000-mile tour of the country were talking about the liquor situation.

" 'Within twenty-five years we'll have nation-wide prohibition,' said the editor.

" 'Impossible!' exclaimed his associate."

"For Exhibit Number Four I choose a dialogue recently quoted in the *Kansas City Star*, in which a man who for years had owned saloons in that city is addressing an attorney who has filed with the police commissioner many remonstrances against the renewal of licenses:

" 'I want you to do me a favor,' he said, 'I want you to put in a protest against a license for me.'

" 'Why, what's the matter?' asked the lawyer, astonished, as he remembered the many times the saloon keeper had been before the board to urge a new location for his own saloons.

" 'I'll tell you something mighty serious is the matter. A fellow has filed for a license in the block where I live. Why, he wants to put a saloon just two doors from my children, and I've got a daughter just growing up. I don't want her put up against a saloon just two doors away.'

" 'Why don't you file the protest yourself?' asked the lawyer.

" 'Say, I would be a fine person to file a protest against a saloon because it is near my home after the times I have asked for saloons in residence districts, wouldn't I?'"

— *From The Independent.*

Deacon Giles' Distillery. The tract with this name, written by Rev. Dr. Cheever, is one of the most effective of temperance illustrations. It represents, as in a dream, that the workmen in Deacon Giles' Distillery suddenly left him, when a set of singular looking fellows applied for work, and were permitted to run the distillery by night. They were very busy, and made a large quantity of rum. But they wrote on each barrel and cask invisible inscriptions, which remained invisible until the first glass was drawn, but then burned in flames of awful red. Most of the titles ran thus: "Consumption sold here. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." "Convulsions and Epilepsies. Inquire at A. Giles' Distillery." "Insanity and Murder. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." "Dropsy and Rheumatism, Putrid Fever, and Cholera in the collapse. Inquire at Amos A. Giles' Distillery." "Delirium Tremens. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." Some of the demons had even taken sentences from the Scriptures, and marked the hogsheds thus: "Who hath woe? Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." "Who hath redness of eyes? Inquire at A. Giles' Distillery." Others had written sentences like the following: "A potion from the lake of fire and brimstone. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." All these inscriptions burned, when visible, a "still and awful red." One of the most terrible in its appearance was as follows: "Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery."

In the course of the week these casks were sold, and as soon as the retailer had begun to draw from them, the invisible inscription flamed out on the cask, visible to every beholder. Rumseller and rumdrinker were affrighted at the truth thus read. One would have thought that the bare sight would have been enough to terrify every drunkard from his cups, and every trader from his dreadful traffic.

33. And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34. But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be the greatest*.

35. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36. And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

Child's Temperance Pledge.

"My body is a temple,
To God it does belong;
He bids me keep it for His use;
He wants it pure and strong.
The things that harm the body
I must not use at all.
Tobacco is one hurtful thing,
Another — Alcohol.
Into my mouth they shall not go;
When tempted, I will answer 'NO',
And every day I'll watch and pray,
'Lord, keep me pure and strong away.'"

IV. THE DISCIPLES ON THE WAY WERE DISCUSSING AMONG THEMSELVES, "WHO IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?"

Mark 9:33-35. When they had reached Capernaum, and had been settled in the house, probably Peter's (Mark 1:29), Jesus asked them, **What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way, or as better in Am. R., "What were ye reasoning by the way?"** But they held their peace, for they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest.

Jesus sat down and explained to his disciples the true nature of seeking to be great, and what is greatness in the kingdom of God on earth or in heaven.

His First Principle. 35. If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all. The whole principle of Christ's kingdom is the exact opposite of the usual worldly plan. Nearly all the evils that have come to the church have come through a disregard of this command, — a desire to be honored and to rule, rather than to serve and help. Jesus does not forbid the desire to be great, but only the desire for selfish greatness. The wish to be greater than others is always a wrong ambition. The wish to be as great, as good, as useful as possible, to grow and improve, is right, but has its dangers. But the desire to serve others can never be too strong. **Let him be your minister** (Matt. 20:26), *diakonos*, one who serves; our word *deacon* is almost a transcript of the Greek. He is the greatest who does the greatest service to his fellow-men. In all he does he is seeking not to exalt himself, not to receive honor, not to be thought greatest, but to do the most good, to be the most helpful, to confer the largest benefits.

Which of the Twelve will be greatest. It was natural that the nine disciples who were not with Jesus in the Transfiguration, should question whether the other three, Peter, James, and John, were to receive higher places and more important work than the others.

In the same spirit the mother of Zebedee's sons, James and John, came with them and asked Jesus, "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left in thy kingdom." That is, in the two chief places of honor. The first place of honor was at the right hand of the sovereign; the second, the left hand. See Lesson VI (XIX).

V. THE CHILD IN THE MIDST. vs. 36, 37. Jesus as an example and an illustration, called a little child unto him, probably one of those playing near, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me (Matt. 18:2-5).

The meaning is, you must have those qualities which are characteristic of childhood, which make the ideal childhood. As Dr. Robinson puts it, "What you would have your child be to you, that be yourself to God." The ideal childhood is exem-

37. Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38. And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.

39. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

plified by the childhood of Jesus himself. These qualities are: (1) humility; (2) freedom from ambition, rivalry, or jealousy; (3) tender and gracious affection; (4) perfect trust; (5) obedience; (6) a teachable spirit; (7) unworldliness; (8) indifference to the distinction of rank and wealth. Without these they not only could not be first, as they were seeking to be, but could not even *enter* the kingdom, and



The Child in the Midst.

Bilda.

have any part in it. Why? Because the kingdom of heaven is a spiritual kingdom, and the self-seeking spirit is diametrically opposed to its spirit.

The ideal child is one born of healthy Christian parents who live as Christians in the home, in society, and in business; who train their children in every good word and work for the kingdom of heaven on earth as it is in heaven. While the parents are to train the children for the kingdom of heaven, at the same time they will find that the care for children and the training of children are among the most effective means for the growth of their own characters. It is hard for any person to become his or her best without personal contact with the minds of children. If you have none of your own, then adopt them, gather a class in the Sunday school, beg for the privilege of teaching children, work with and for the children.

37. Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name, receiveth me. "To see and love the divine beauty that dwells in the spirit of a little child, is to see and love the divine beauty of Jesus Christ himself." — *Geo. R. Bliss, D.D.* Whosoever shall receive me receiveth not me only, but him that sent me. The unity of excellence in the perfect Christian in Christ and God, and the true Christian ideal of character is declared to be the character of God.

VI. A MAN DOING GOOD, BUT NOT JOINING THE DISCIPLES, vs. 38-

40. The disciples forbade him to cast out devils, but Jesus said, Forbid him not. . . . For he that is not against us is on our part. There are very many ways of

40. For he that is not against us is on our part.

41. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

42. And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

serving and obeying Christ. There are at least 186 denominations in the United States, and there are many other forms and methods of bringing people to Jesus Christ. The rule Jesus gives for us is to join with them, not oppose them. **For there is no man which shall do a miracle ("mighty work," Am. R.) in my name, that can lightly ("quickly," Am. R.) speak evil of me.**

Illustration. "There is a beautiful legend that tells of a saintly man who was very greatly beloved by the angels who had seen much of his godly life on earth. The angels asked God to give to this man some new power, some mark of divine favor, some new gift which would make him still more useful. They were told to see the man and ask him what special power he would like to have. He did not want greater power. But at last he answered that if he must make a choice, he would like a power to do a great deal of good among men without even knowing it."

VII. THE CUP OF COLD WATER, v. 41. For whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water to drink *because ye are Christ's*, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward (Am. R.). In Matthew 10:42, "a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple." The cup of cold water is the simplest gift, and a representative of the many little kindnesses that children can give at home and elsewhere, by which they may be trained to give larger gifts, and to supply larger needs.

Over a drinking fountain by the roadside in the White Mountains is a large sign-board with the following verse from Whittier, —

"O traveler, stay thy weary feet,
Drink of this fountain pure and sweet,
It flows for rich and poor the same.
Then go thy way, remembering still
The wayside spring beneath the hill;
The cup of water in His name."

VIII. PUTTING STUMBLING BLOCKS IN THE WAY OF YOUNG CHRISTIANS, v. 42. Whosoever shall offend ("cause to stumble," Am. R.) one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone ("a great millstone,"

Am. R.) were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. "Two kinds of millstones were in use: the one turned by hand; the other, and larger, by an ass. It was this latter of which Jesus speaks." (The smaller in Matt. 24:41; Luke 17:35.) **Were hanged about his neck, to make escape impossible. And that he were drowned in the depth of the sea (Matt. 18:6) which was not far away. It is better to die a thousand deaths than to lead another into sin, and thus to murder his soul. The offender gains a millstone, but loses his life. It is Satan that says, "All that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job 2:4). To every true man there are many things worth more than life.**

"For sadder sight than eye can know,
Than proud bark lost, or seamen's woe,
Than battle fire, or tempest cloud,
Or prey bird's shriek, or ocean shroud, —
The shipwreck of a soul."



An Old Millstone.

But there is one sadder sight, and that is the shipwrecking of others' souls, holding out the false light that ruins others as well as ourselves.

The number of pitfalls, temptations, snares, around the young are very many.

Read Anthony Comstock's *Traps for the Young*, a book of 253 pages concerning the traps of every kind.

Name some of the temptations which are sometimes the cause of ruining the young.

Are there more "traps for the young" in the cities than in the country?

Do these temptations come from the older people or from young companions?

How can the young resist and overcome them?

"Who shall preserve thee, beautiful child?
Keep thee as thou art now,
Bring thee a spirit undefiled
At God's pure throne to bow?"

LESSON V (XVIII). — May 5.

JESUS SETS NEW STANDARDS OF LIVING. — Mark 10: 1-31.

PRINT Mark 10: 17-27.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* — MATT. 6: 33.

Additional Material for Teachers: Gen. 1: 27; 2: 18-25; Ex. 20: 2-17; Deut. 5: 16-21; Matt. 18: 1-14; Matt. 19: 16-30; Luke 18: 15-29.

Primary Topic: Jesus and the Children.

Lesson Material: Mark 10: 13-16.

Memory Verse: Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not. — Mark 10: 14.

Junior Topic: How God Would Have Us Live.

Additional Material: Ex. 20: 2-17; Lev. 19: 11-18; Matt. 22: 34-40.

Intermediate, Senior and Adult Topic: The Cost and Rewards of Christian Service.

Additional Material: See same for Teachers.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO THE CLASS.

"*The Triumph of a Day Dream*" is one of Miss Slattery's bright topics. This lesson is full of practical opportunities for discussion. Don't preach too much to your pupils. Keep them wide awake, and set them to think, and feel and do.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Mark 10: 1, Nov., Dec., A.D. 29. Mark 10: 2-52, March, A.D. 30.

Place. — Mark 10: 1, in Galilee. Mark 10: 2-52, Perea beyond Jordan.

Near the close of Jesus' ministry.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on the synoptic Gospels. Prof. Shailer Mathew's *Social Teaching of Jesus*. Dr. Boardman's *The Kingdom*.

On eternal life see Professor Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. Guthrie's *Sermons*, "Eternal Life."

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why should a rich young man seek to inherit eternal life?
What is eternal life?
Why did Jesus refer him to the Ten Commandments?
What was the one thing he lacked?
Why did Jesus love this man?
On what conditions could he have eternal life?
How far do these conditions apply to all?
The camel and the needle's eye.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: New Standards of Living.

- I. A YOUNG MAN SEEKING TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE, vs. 17, 18.
- II. SEEKING ETERNAL LIFE BY WAY OF THE COMMANDMENTS, vs. 19-21.
- III. THE GREAT REFUSAL, vs. 21, 22.
- IV. JESUS AND THE CHILDREN. A CONTRAST, vs. 13-16.
- V. HOW GOD WOULD HAVE US LIVE, vs. 23-27.
- VI. THE COSTS AND REWARDS OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE, vs. 28-31.

LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Christianity and the Social Crisis, by Professor Rauschenbusch.

A most effective illustration is found in the tract, *Captain Ball's Experience*; also in Trench's *Poems*, "Mahmoud, the Idol-Breaker." Dante, wandering with Virgil through the *Inferno*, thought he saw the young ruler searching for his lost opportunity. Ruskin's *Queen of the Air*, §§ 49, 50, on "Sell all thou hast." Whately's *Annotations on Bacon's Essays*, p. 366, "Riches." The description of

the "wicket gate" in *Pilgrim's Progress*. The picture in *Scripture Emblems*, of a man trying to go through the wicket gate with the world in his arms.

Fiske's *Boy-life and Self-Government*. *The Boy and the Church*, by Eugene C. Foster.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ and the Rich Young Man, by Bida, Hofmann.*

Jesus and the Children, see last lesson.

17. And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18. And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God.*

I. A YOUNG MAN SEEKING TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE. vs. 17, 18.

Jesus was on his way towards Jerusalem, along the road in Perea, east of the Jordan. He had been preaching in a house by the way, and while there, young children were brought to him by their mothers. Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them; and with the child thus "in the midst" he taught the disciples and the people a lesson about his kingdom.

17. And when he was gone forth (better as Am. R., "As he was going forth") from the house, into the way, there came one running, who had probably heard what Jesus had been teaching about the way to enter the kingdom of God, and whose heart had been stirred. The fact that he ran showed his earnestness. No common reason will ever lead the Oriental to break his slow, sedate, and dignified walk. And kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? "In his eagerness to obtain spiritual advice he showed no less zeal than if he had sought the greatest of temporal benefits." — *Expos. Greek Test.*

Inherit eternal life. That is, he wished to be a child of God and as a child inherit from his Heavenly Father, and so have lasting possession of eternal life, that is, life after death, the life of the soul, the life that has no end.

The Character of the Young Man. 1. According to Luke he was a ruler, a term of considerable latitude indicating a ruler of the synagogue, a leading man of influence, or, according to Josephus, a member of the great Sanhedrin.

2. He was young, rich and honored.

3. He was religiously trained and acquainted with the law.

4. He had a lovable disposition (Mark), for Jesus was drawn toward him in love.

5. This young man seems to have had, from a worldly point of view, an irreproachable moral character. He had resisted the corrupting influences around him.

6. He was a candid inquirer, breaking away from the routine religion of his synagogue, and recognizing truth and goodness wherever he saw it.

7. He was courageous. Only a brave heart could have enabled one in so prominent a position to risk the opposition and reproaches of his associates, and reverence in so public a manner the despised Nazarene.

8. He had high aspirations. He was not content with wealth, and position, and outward morality, but had set his heart on eternal life.

9. He was in earnest, as his conduct shows.

10. He had some knowledge of Jesus, and his teachings and his miracles.

18. Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? "This question indicates that it was necessary for the young ruler to examine his own idea of good." — *Weidner*.

"This was only a teacher's way of leading on a pupil. Of course there was only one answer to that: God is the one good being; and his revealed will shows us the good he would have us do." — *Expositor's Greek Testament*.

The young man's conscience would quickly reveal to him that his goodness was imperfect. Therefore Jesus holds up before him the divine standard.

19. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

II. SEEKING ETERNAL LIFE BY THE WAY OF THE COMMANDMENTS, vs. 19-21. *Jesus continued.* Keep the commandments (Matt.). Thou knowest the commandments (Luke, Mark).

The Young Man replied, Which?

Jesus answered (v. 19) by repeating to him the second table of the law, our duties to our fellow men, —

Thou shalt not commit adultery. Have you escaped all impure thoughts?

Do not kill. Have you never been careless of human life in any of the many ways man shortens the life of others?

Do not steal. By false weights, by all business that injures the property and rights of others.

Do not bear false witness. By lying, slander, speaking evil of others, imputing false motives. Keep the three sieves always with you, — Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?

Defraud not. Be honest and true to the last item.

Honor thy father and mother. By love, obedience, and by treating them always with the utmost respect.

These are but hints of the many, many ways in which the rich young man tried sincerely to keep God's Commandments.

But as he thought over his life, he must have realized that his life and conduct were not perfect, as all of us must do. Try it and see if you can say with the rich young man, **Master, all these have I observed from my youth.**

21. Then Jesus beholding him loved him.

He was so noble, so earnest and sincere in his seeking, so lovable, that the soul of Jesus was drawn out to him. And all the more because he was not satisfied with any outward keeping of the law. Jesus saw in him great possibilities of character, and of service, a pillar in the temple of God, a power for good in the new kingdom.

III. THE GREAT REFUSAL, vs. 21, 22. Because Jesus loved him, because he saw how good and glorious were the possibilities before him, he took him by the hand to help him up the one last step by which he would enter the door to eternal life. Jesus said unto him, **One thing thou lackest**, not one individual thing, but a life principle, a new kind of devotion.

The fact is that Jesus gave this young man the greatest opportunity possible. He offered him the most happy, glorious, heavenly blessings that were possible for him. His wealth was but dross compared with what it could do in advancing the kingdom of God, by giving to the poor, helping in every good cause.

If the young man would sell his possessions and take up his cross and follow Jesus, he could dream no dream or see no vision of glory that would give him such blessings as Jesus would give him, for He would make him rich toward God, and give him **treasure in heaven.** And come. Come to Jesus, to his character and



The Rich Young Man. Bida.

22. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

person, join the company of the apostles who were to carry on the kingdom of God in the world. He might be the business man of the apostles in the place of Judas, who had failed. He would thus be able to have a noble and glorious part in the redemption of the world, and thus have treasure unspeakable in heaven. **And follow me.** To follow Jesus *then* meant to be a personal attendant on his ministry; to go about with him from place to place, as well as to imitate and obey him. *Now* it means (1) to obey his commandments; (2) to imitate his example, and to live like him. All this was an example of the meaning of **take up the cross** (omitted in Am. R.).

22. And he was sad (Am. R. "his countenance fell") at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. Like the merchantman seeking goodly pearls (Matt. 13 : 45, 46), he found the pearl of great price; but unlike him, he refused to sell all that he had to obtain it.

In a few years his possessions were ravaged by the Roman legion, while the disciples introduced a new and blessed kingdom on earth, whose influence is widening all down the ages.

Illustration. There is a legend of the Apostle Thomas, who is called "the architect," that in his labors for the Gospel he reached India, where king Gondoforus sent for him to build "a prouder palace than mortals know," and placed untold

treasures in his hand, and then went away.

But St. Thomas built only a spiritual palace. (See Lesson VI. in First Quarter.)

IV. JESUS AND THE CHILDREN. A CONTRAST, vs. 13-16. Make in your mind pictures of the scene.

1. Jesus and his disciples are walking from Galilee toward Jerusalem on the road east of the Jordan in the Perea country.

2. On the way they rested in the house of a Pharisee, where there was an earnest discussion.

3. At or near the house as he was departing, mothers brought their young children to Jesus asking him to bless them.

4. Jesus was walking toward the way when the rich young man came running to him to find eternal life.



Christ Blessing Little Children.

Ploekhörst.

Mothers Bring their Children to Jesus. There must have been something very attractive about Jesus in his personality, the beauty of his spirit, the charm of his conversation, the love he bore to all. Without doubt he was tasteful and neat in dress, courteous in manner, gentle, cheerful, and social, a delightful friend and companion, the ideal man, not only in character, but in manners. **That he should touch them.** To impart a blessing on them, by putting his hands upon them and praying (Matt. 19 : 13). The prayer and touch of Jesus would have real power, and would be an influential memory all their lives.

The Twelve Rebuke the Mothers. And his disciples rebuked those that brought them. Found fault with them, and bade them keep away. They probably thought it beneath Jesus' dignity, and that he ought not to stop his important teachings merely to bless a few children. For Jesus was in the midst of a most solemn and important discourse to older people (Matt. 19 : 3-12), and the disciples did not wish

him to be interrupted by children; but Jesus knew that this very interruption was one of the best enforcements of his teaching.

But Jesus Rebuked the Disciples with indignation. **He was much displeased.** For the children are the ones that can best be trained for the kingdom of heaven, and from them shall arise those who shall bring the kingdom of heaven on earth. And the mothers are the ones who can best guide and teach them. Jesus said to his disciples: **Suffer** (permit, let them alone) **the little children to come unto me.** Because he wanted the little children, and the children needed him. Children may know that they are welcome, for they have a special invitation from Jesus. **And forbid them not.** Jesus emphasizes his command by repetition. **For of such is the kingdom of heaven.** The condition, in whatever place, where God is the king, where his subjects love and obey him, and live according to his laws. To this kingdom belong little children and those who have the qualities characteristic of the ideal childhood, — humility, teachableness, obedience, perfect trust, and a wealth of warm and expressive affection.

Then he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them, a blessing they could never forget.

The Child in the Home finds its first and greatest education. School does much, but being born and living in a Christian home, full of love and helpfulness, is the best of all. Every virtue is grown in the home which is pervaded with the atmosphere of Christian living.

Illustration. President Henry Churchill King in a recent sermon quotes one of Norman Duncan's characters who tells of his childhood and of his mother.

"She took me in her lap.

"Look into your mother's eyes, lad,' she said, 'and say after me this: My mother' —

"My mother,' I repeated, very solemnly.

"Looked upon my heart,' —

"Looked upon my heart,' said I.

"And found it brave' —

"An' found it brave.'

"And sweet' —

"An' sweet.'

"Willing for the day's work' —

"Willing for the day's work,' I repeated.

"And harboring no shameful hope' —

"An' harboring — no shameful — hope.'

"Again and again she had me say it, until I knew every word by heart.

"Ah,' she said at last, 'but you'll forget.'

"No, no!' I cried. 'I'll not forget. "My mother looked upon my heart,"' I rattled, "an' found it brave and sweet, willing for the day's work an' harboring no shameful hope." I've not forgot! I've not forgot.'

"He'll forget,' she whispered, but not to me, 'like all children.'

"But I have not forgotten — I have not forgotten — I have never forgotten — that, when I was a child, my mother looked upon my heart and found it brave and sweet, willing for the day's work and harboring no shameful hope."

The Child in the Primary Class in the Sunday School should have the best teachers, the best equipment, the best training possible, always leading to Jesus. The parents should see to it that their children are sent to the Sunday School. No Church can afford to neglect in any degree the best training for the young, who are to become the Church of the future.

The best machinery for its purpose in the whole world should be that which enables religious education to accomplish its purpose.

The Child Early in the Church Fold. "A Boy's Reasoning. It is said that a lad after being taught the lesson of the ninety and nine went home and told his father that he wanted to 'be in the fold,' he wanted to become a Christian. 'Oh, you are too young,' was his father's only answer. At dusk a storm was approaching, and the father sent the boy out to put the sheep into the fold. 'Did you get them all in safely?' the father asked when he returned. 'I put all the old sheep in.' 'You don't mean that you left the lambs out, do you?' 'Why, of course, father; I thought they were too young.' 'You are right,' then answered the father, 'You can only be safe from the storms of temptation by being in the fold of the Good Shepherd, and you cannot enter too young.' — *From Tarbell's Teachers' Guide.*

23. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24. And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27. And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is impossible*, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Spurgeon's Experience. "Of the many boys and girls whom we have received into church fellowship, I can say of them all that they have gladdened my heart, and I have never received any with greater confidence than I have these. And this I have noticed about them, they have greater joy and rejoicing than any others. Among those I have had at any time to exclude from church fellowship, out of a church of 2700 members, I have never had to exclude a single one who was received while yet a child." — *Spurgeon*.

Note that adults need children for their own training and Christian culture. They must receive children if they would receive Christ. There are many ways in these later days of helping the young that were not dreamed of a few years ago.

"I think when I read that sweet story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How he called little children like lambs to his fold —
I should like to have been with him then.

"I wish that his hands had been laid on my head,
That his arms had been thrown around me,
That I might have seen his sweet look when he said,
'Let the little ones come unto me.'"

V. HOW GOD WOULD HAVE US LIVE, vs. 23-27. When the rich young man failed to accept the invitation of Jesus, the Master saith to his disciples, *How hardly, i.e. with what difficulty, shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.* This was so astonishing to the disciples that Jesus explained the fact by saying *Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!* "Like all Jews they had been accustomed to regard worldly prosperity as a special mark of the favor of God, for their ancient scriptures seemed always to connect the enjoyment of temporal blessings with obedience to the divine law." — *Geikie*. There were so many temptations to do wrong, to oppress the poor, to be unjust, to take an unfair advantage in business, that it was easy to forget God's law.

Read what Jesus said of the Pharisees in Matthew 23:3-6, 13-15.

An Illustration. 25. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. The camel being the largest animal with which the Jews were acquainted, its name became proverbial for denoting anything remarkably large; and "a camel's passing through a needle's eye came, by consequence, as appears from some rabbinical writings, to express a thing absolutely impossible." — *George Campbell, Oriental Proverbs*.

Compare the strait gate of Matt. 7:13, 14; the description of "the wicket gate" in *Pilgrim's Progress*; the picture, in *Scripture Emblems*, of a man trying to go through the wicket gate with the world in his arms.

"I would ride the camel,
Yes, leap him flying, through the needle's eye,
As easily as such a pampered soul
Could pass the narrow gate." — *Southey*.

The disciples were astonished out of measure (Am. R. "exceedingly") saying among themselves (Am. R. "unto him"), *Who then can be saved?* Many others have been puzzled to know how Jesus would have us live. The principle is that we are to give up everything to Christ — our property, our time, our all — *to use as he would have us*. We are to give so much as he directs; to leave all, and be missionaries, if he demands; to suffer the loss of all, if that is needful, in order that we may do right; to spend upon our families, our business, our pleasure, just as Christ would have us. The man who gives up all to be a minister or missionary and the man

whose vocation is business are to be equally consecrated, are equally to follow Jesus. There are "two vocations," but one principle, one spirit. Jesus did not require Zaccheus to give up all his property. To make this the requirement of Christianity would be to destroy civilization and progress and prevent the millennium. To do what Christ meant and taught in other places would produce exactly the opposite effect. "Was not this what Christ enjoined upon the young ruler — a conscious, willing transfer of his great possessions from himself to God, in such a real way as that henceforth *his sense of ownership* in them should cease, and a *sense of stewardship* should take its place?" — *S. J. Humphrey, D.D.*

The Christian must use the right method of gaining money, and then use money for the progress of mankind, for the thousand things that are needful, for missions, churches, hospitals, Y.M.C.A., etc.

A Peculiar but Wise Will, recently published, has a clause especially for children, well worth their learning and practising, — "My wish to my successors and my prayer to my children." They read:

"To protect mamma, to beautify her old age, to make her bitter life sweet, to heal her broken heart, not to weep after me, on the contrary to think of me with joy; and the main thing — to live together in peace, to bear no hatred one for another, to help one another in bad times, to remember one another upon occasion in the family, to have pity on a poor man, and, when circumstances permit, to pay my debts, should I have any. Children! Carry with honor my hard-earned Jewish name [Hebrew, *Sholem Aleichem* = Latin, *Pax Vobiscum* = English, *Peace be with you*] and may God in Heaven come to your help. Amen."

VI. THE COST AND THE REWARDS OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE, vs. 28-31. Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. "We" refers to all the disciples, but it was natural that Peter spoke first. They had all left possessions, boats, business, property, homes, means of subsistence, — all had been given up. Peter would ask how he and the other disciples stood in respect to the kingdom of God. Have we stood the test you applied to the young ruler? Shall we have eternal life?

Jesus' Answer. — Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

So Jesus had already said, — Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things, which the Gentiles seek, shall be added unto you (Matt. 6 : 31-34).

There is no greater blessing than the privilege of making this world better. The disciples, as they gave up everything to make Christianity a success, were happier, as well as more useful, than all the wealth of the Cæsars could make them. Jesus says to them, — ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Missionaries, and ministers, and Christian business men, are realizing God's promises far more to-day than ever before in the world's history. We have God's word for it that they surpass our highest imaginings, and far exceed the joys of earth, blessed as those are. We know, however, that the greatest of all our joys, even through an eternity of bliss, will be the joy of loving Christ and being loved by Him.

THE WORLD IS GROWING BETTER

Some years ago an article appeared, I think in the *Outlook*, with the title "My Billionaire," which showed the amazing changes in a multitude of directions during the last hundred years.

There is not room in a single lesson to even name them. But it would be profitable if the class would recall as many as possible in both directions. (1) The material things that make the spiritual development possible. The inventions, the means of travel, the new continents, the new methods of business, the great increase in money gifts, etc. And (2) the development of missions, churches, benevolent gifts, Y.M.C.A., Temperance, Sunday Schools, Young People's Societies, hospitals, and a thousand other things. Except in the first century there has never been such progress toward the kingdom of God.

A Simple Illustration will help us to realize the facts.

Put some ink in a glass. It is very black.

Pour into it some clear water. It looks just as black as before; but it is not so black.

Repeat the dilution of the ink. Gradually the liquid in the glass grows lighter and lighter till it appears nearly clear.

The world has an abundance of evils, and many believe it to be growing worse and worse.

But if we consider how much and increasing good is mingled with the evil, we will see that the good is gradually prevailing over the evil. And the times are growing more rapidly toward the kingdom of heaven than ever before.

LESSON VI (XIX). — May 12.

JESUS FACES THE CROSS. — Mark 10:32-52.

PRINT Mark 10:32-45.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross.* — PHIL. 2:8.

Devotional Reading : Isa. 42 : 1-9.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 20 : 20-28; Luke 22 : 25-27.

Primary Topic : Jesus and the Blind Beggar.

Lesson Material : Mark 10 : 46-52.

Memory Verse : Be of good cheer : rise, he calleth thee. — Mark 10 : 49.

Junior and Intermediate Topic : Jesus Teaches how to be Great.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Miss Slattery, one of the best speakers and teachers in the whole country, uses



Golden Candlestick.

From the Arch of Titus, Rome.

as an illustration the Golden Candlestick in the Temple.

"The seven lamps on the golden candlestick which must be lighted and kept shining in every Sunday School teacher's life are Knowledge, Training, Example, Perseverance, Enthusiasm,

Sympathy and Faith. How the rays of each one of these lamps throw light into the dark places of the teacher's experience and show the way to the full glory of successful accomplishment is inspiringly told."

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — March, A.D. 30.

Place. — The request of James and John, on the way to Jerusalem, in southern Perea.

The blind men receive their sight at or near Jericho.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why did Jesus refer again and again to his sufferings on the cross?

The character of James.

In what respects did he differ from John?

What favor did they ask of Jesus?

What was the motive of the mother and her sons?

What is the test of greatness?

True and false ambition.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus Faces the Cross.

I. A VISION OF THE FUTURE, vs. 32-34.

II. THE AMBITION OF JAMES AND JOHN, vs. 35-45.

III. JESUS AND THE BLIND BARTIMEUS, vs. 46-52.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Dr. W. N. Clark's *Commentary on Mark*. Professor Swete's *Commentary on Mark*. James and John in Vance's *College of the Apostles*; and Thompson's *The Apostles at Every Day Men*. The American Commentary (Baptist). *Expositor's Greek Testament*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Mrs. Gatty's *Parables from Nature*, "Imperfect Instruments." Bulwer's

Pilgrims of the Rhine, "The Journey of the Virtues and their Contention." Sidney Lanier's *Poems*, "The Crystal." Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, act III, scene 2, "Cromwell, I charge thee,—fling away ambition." *Julius Caesar*, act I, scene 2, "Young Ambition's Ladder."

THE LESSON IN ART.

Murillo's picture of *The Angels in the Kitchen*, or *The Miracle of San Diego*. *Zebedee's Children*, by Bonifazio II.* *Jesus Healing Bartimæus*, by an unknown artist.*

32. And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33. Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:

34. And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

I. A VISION OF THE FUTURE, Mark 10:32-34. We now have a picture of Jesus and his disciples walking toward Jerusalem, while multitudes were thronging the way to the Passover feast, the great feast of the Jews, held in the spring, the same time as our Easter. Jesus was walking alone, while the disciples lingered behind, in order not to disturb the thoughts of the Master.

Now for the third time (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32, 33) Jesus foretold to his disciples the tortures, scourging, mockeries, and the death on the cross, and that after three days he would rise again. So he said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." And to prove it he restored Lazarus to life (John 11:25, 42-44).

Why did he speak of it so often?

It was lest the disciples should be taken unawares and be overwhelmed in a sudden storm of temptation.

They needed this preparation for what was in the immediate future, so that when they saw him die on the cross, instead of having their faith in him shaken by that event, they would have it established, by regarding it as the fulfilment of his predictions. Here was set before the disciples a living example of loving service at great cost, of seeking not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and hence of the highest kind of heroism and greatness. The picture of his sufferings is very vivid. There was to be every form of insult and torture, and death on the cross.

"There are few pictures in the gospel," says Canon Farrar, "more striking than this of Jesus going forth to his death, and walking alone along the path to the deep valley, while behind him, in awful reverence and mingled anticipations of dread and hope, the disciples walked and dared not disturb his meditations." They saw him going on bravely, with sublime heroism, "like the stars, not hasting, not tarrying," into the very face of danger and death. This was a perfect example of true heroism.

The Heroism of the disciples was great. They were learning of Jesus what heroism costs. And however much they misunderstood, they had a gleam of hope in the assurance of Jesus that death did not end all, but that Jesus would be the ever-living Saviour.

II. THE AMBITION OF JAMES AND JOHN, vs. 35-45. It is well for us, first of all, to keep in mind these two brothers and their family.

ZEBEDEE (*Jehovah hath endowed*) was the father of the apostles James and John. Their mother's name was Salome (*Peaceful*). The family lived either at Bethsaida or in its immediate neighborhood, on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. The

35. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37. They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask : can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

father and sons were fishermen; and from the mention of hired servants, and the acquaintance between the apostle John and Annas the High Priest (John 18 : 15), together with the fact that Jesus on the cross committed his mother to the home and care of John, — renders it probable that the family of Zebedee were in easy circumstances, compared with most of the other apostles.

THE TWO BROTHERS. 1. James "*the Great*," that is, the *Senior*, to distinguish him from the other James, the less (Mark 15 : 40), that is, *Junior*.

James in every instance save one (Luke 9 : 28) is named before John, doubtless because James was the elder brother. James Senior survived the Lord but 14 years, suffering martyrdom in A.D. 44, while John survived Christ's death at least 70 years.

2. "*John* represents youth in the college of the apostles." He "was probably the youngest of the Twelve."

John is often pictured as effeminate. He is called "the gentle John" as though his character was lacking in force. Nothing could be more erroneous. He was the Apostle of Love. That word occurs no fewer than 50 times in the five brief chapters on his First Epistle.

John was not wholly amiable, but his intense spirit blazed at times in the fires of love. He was a Boanerges, a son of thunder against what seemed to him wrong. — *From Vance's College of the Apostles, and Thompson's The Apostles as Every Day Men.*

SALOME AND HER TWO SONS COME TO JESUS ASKING A SPECIAL FAVOR. THEY WISHED TO BE HEROES, BUT SET OUT IN THE WRONG WAY. HOWEVER, AT LENGTH THEY BECAME GREATER MEN AND GREATER HEROES IN CHRIST'S WAY THAN THEIR HIGHEST DREAMS AT THIS TIME.

According to Mark, the sons came making the request for themselves. This agrees with Matthew, for she came with her sons.

It is not known whether the request originated with the mother in her ambition for her sons, or whether the two brethren had directed this request *through their mother*, because they remembered the rebuke which had followed their former contention about precedence (Matt. 18 : 1-3; Mark 9 : 33-37). **Worshipping him.** That is, *doing obeisance*, prostrating herself, with her sons, as was usual in asking a favor of a king. **Desiring a certain thing of him.** She asked a favor, but did not at once tell what it was.

How to Understand the Request. To understand this request, we need to realize that the disciples did not, and at that time could not, clearly understand the nature and organization of the kingdom Christ was founding, nor separate it from an outward kingdom of worldly splendor. Not long before this Jesus had told his disciples that they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, while he sat on his own throne of glory (Matt. 19 : 28), and they felt sure that the time must now be close at hand. He was the promised Messiah. See Rev. 11 : 15; Phil. 2 : 9; Dan. 7 : 13; Isa. 9 : 6, 7.

Jesus: What would ye that I should do for you?

James and John: That we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left. Not in the trial and by the cross, but in thy glory, as the Messiah King. That is, in the two chief places of honor. The first place of honor was the right of the sovereign; the second, the left hand. — *Josephus' Antiquities*, VI. 11, 9. They doubtless still expected an outward kingdom of worldly splendor, but as the natural condition for the spiritual and moral kingdom into which the world was to be transformed.

Jesus: Ye know not what ye ask : can ye (Am. R. "are ye able to") drink of the cup that I drink of? Have you counted the cost? Can you pay the price? "*The cup* is an Old Testament image of a man's lot, or portion, as holding what

39. And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40. But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared.

41. And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

life God pours out for him." — *Jacobus*. "The cup signifies suffering voluntarily taken."

James and John: We are able (Am. R.).

Jesus: Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized. James was the first of the apostles to suffer martyrdom (Acts 12:1, 2), and John had a long life of labors, persecutions, and banishment. These trials and tests they might be sure of. Jesus confirmed their judgment of themselves. It was an honor to them for Jesus to say this.

But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is (Am. R. "hath been") prepared. Honors and place cannot be given in such a way as your request implies. I cannot determine by any personal preference, or by mere sovereign pleasure, or favoritism, to whom any position in the kingdom of God shall be given. Other principles hold there. Those only can have high place who have become fitted for it, for *it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared*.

"She would have had them lifted high
Above their fellowmen;
Sharing their pride with mother eye —
Had been blest mother then.

"But would she praise for granted quest,
Counting her prayer well heard,
If of the three on Calvary's crest
They shared the first and third?"

— *George MacDonald*.

What were the Motives of the Two Brothers? 1. We may be sure that they were good and true men, as good as any in the nation. They were probably not consciously ambitious above the other disciples.

2. They were nearer to Jesus than the others. Several times they, with Peter, had been taken apart from the rest as better fitted to be with Jesus (in the sick home, Mk. 5:37, Jairus' daughter; and in the Transfiguration, Mk. 9:2. They were also nearest to Jesus in Gethsemane). Therefore they had some reason for thinking that Jesus regarded them as especially fitted for these places. They were natural leaders, self-confident.

3. We may be sure that with this ambition, and far more prominent in their minds, was the desire for a larger field of usefulness, a confidence that they could carry out the work of Jesus better than the others, and that therefore it was their duty to do it. Which of the disciples would be willing to dare and to suffer so much as they for the Cause and the Master?

4. They had a deep love for Jesus, and desired to be as near to him as they could.

5. At the same time there was an element of selfishness in the request, whether conscious or not; for possessing the highest places necessarily kept others from enjoying them.

6. Our Lord, it will be observed, does not *deny* the petition of James and John, or say they shall *not* occupy the place in his kingdom which they now improperly sought. For aught we know, *that may be their true place*.

God's instruments for his great work of bringing men into the kingdom are those who have been "prepared of my Father," and their particular form of work is also "prepared" for them.

It requires a long and hard training to fill the highest and most useful places in God's work. The question is Are you willing to be trained? Are you willing to choose the right end, and subordinate all things to it?

When the ten heard it, they began to be moved with indignation concerning James and John (v. 41, Am. R.). This was perfectly natural. It was an assumption that these two apostles were superior to the other ten. And the two brothers had given them abundant occasion for it. Only the indignation of the ten showed that they had the same spirit as the two which Jesus condemned. They were guilty of the very common act of showing in our complaints of others the very faults in ourselves

42. But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

which we condemn in them. The selfish think others are selfish; the fretful think others are in bad temper.

False Ambition. The ambition which seeks great things for oneself is not only evil in itself, but full of dangers, and crowded with temptations to sin and crime.

"How like a mounting devil in the heart
Rules the unreined Ambition! Let it once
But play the monarch, and its haughty brow
Glows with a beauty that bewilders thought
And unthrones peace forever. Putting on

The very pomp of Lucifer, it turns
The heart to ashes."

"Ambition only, gives
Even of bitterness a beaker full."

—N. P. Willis.

THE ONLY TRUE GREATNESS AMONG THE DISCIPLES AND IN THE TRUE CHURCH. "THE HIGH HONOR OF HUMILITY." Jesus called the whole twelve around him, and said the Gentiles, including the Romans, "lord it over" (Am. R.) the people, and exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you. But whosoever will be great (Am. R. "would become great") among you, shall be your minister, one who does service and gives help. Nearly all the evils that have come to the church have come through a disregard of this command, — a desire to be honored and to rule rather than to serve and help.

44. Whosoever . . . will be the chiefest, "be first" (Am. R.). He is greatest who does the greatest service to his fellow-men, confers the largest benefits on them at real cost to himself. It requires heroism, self-sacrifice, the highest qualities of manhood, all that is divinest, noblest, most heavenly. It requires the love that is the greatest thing in the world.

45. For even the Son of man, the greatest man, the Son of God, came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to do this at the greatest self-sacrifice, by giving his life a ransom for many, "the many," the whole multitude of the human race. Here was the example, the proof, the ideal of Christ's teachings.

"I ask no heaven till earth be thine,
Nor glory crown, while work of mine
Remaineth here. When earth shall shine
Among the stars,

Her sins wiped out; her captives free;
Her voice a music unto thee;
For crown, New Work give thou to me,
Lord, here am I."

President Finney's Answer. While President Finney was President of Oberlin, a woman spoke in the prayermeeting, declaring that she had come to Oberlin because of its spiritual power; but after living there three months she did not see as the people were any better than others. Dr. Finney answered by replying, "My dear woman, what have you done to make Oberlin better during this time?"

Deacon's Week. Several years ago there was published a small tract with this title. It was at the time when the first week in the new year was set apart as a week of prayer. One minister proposed that the whole week be given to ministering to any one who was in need, or sick, or neglecting their religious life, or to any service that could help the church or the community. Their prayers were changed to service.

Christian Endeavor. About the time this lesson was being written, there came to the prayermeeting in a body 30 or more C.E. young people, most of whom took some part.

In another case one hundred men of the congregation came, each bringing another man with him.

Employers of Labor. "If you are an employer, make it your business to know what the labor union men and the socialists are saying, that you may see the industrial situation from their angle of vision. If you are a wage-earner, try to understand the difficulties which a man who is a merchant or a manufacturer has to face in organizing and maintaining a business which affords employment to hundreds of people

incapable of organizing such a business for themselves. You cannot look with intelligence upon your own things until you have formed the habit of looking also upon the things of others." — *President Charles R. Brown.*

Illustration. Loch Katrine, embowered among the Highlands of Scotland, a poem in water, immortalized in story and song till it seems almost transfigured with a glory beyond its natural beauty and charm, is yet the source of the water supply of the city of Glasgow, flowing down among the homes of the poor, cleansing the filth from the streets, bringing refreshment, cheer, comfort, cleanliness, and health everywhere. It does its best work here, without detracting from its natural charm among the highlands.

"Beautiful hands are they that do
Deeds that are noble, good and true;
Busy with them the long day through.

"Beautiful feet are they that go
Swiftly to lighten another's woe,
Through summer's heat or winter's snow."

III. JESUS AND THE BLIND BARTIMEUS. Mark 10:46-52. Jesus and his disciples had been walking from Galilee toward Jerusalem, in order to reach the

city in time for the Passover. Great crowds accompanied Jesus. We know nothing more of his journey till he had reached the Jordan at the fords near Jericho, and gone up to that city, where the blind men met him.

Jericho was situated about fifteen or twenty miles north-east of Jerusalem, five miles west of the Jordan, and six or seven north of the Dead Sea. In the days of our Lord, Jericho was an important city.

Blind beggars were not unfamiliar near the city. One of them first heard the tramping and the voices of the great throng pressing forward in the narrow streets, and then he inquired what it all meant (Luke), and they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.



Modern Jericho.

"What means this eager, anxious throng,
Which moves with busy haste along —
These wondrous gatherings day by day!

What means this strange commotion, pray?
In accents hushed the throng reply:
'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.'

He had heard about Jesus and his wonderful cures.

The Blind Man. "A shrill cry rises on the air above the noise and bustle of the crowd. Again and again the earnest and piteous accents, 'Son of David, have mercy upon me!' interrupt the passers by."

The Crowd. "The eager, surging crowd, in their desire to press onwards, with all the tyranny of mob rule, and the impatience of selfishness, try to stop the importunate man." Shall a poor old blind beggar obstruct the whole crowd of eager men? **And many charged him that he should hold his peace.**

The Blind Man. But he cried out the more a great deal, **Thou Son of David, thou Messiah of Israel, have mercy on me.** It was life or death with him.

Jesus stood still in the midst of the crowd, and said, probably to his disciples, **Call ye him** (Am. R.). His name was Bartimeus, son of Timeus, probably well-known to many.

The Disciples say to the blind man, **Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.**

The Blind Man, casting away his garment, that might have delayed him, rose (Am. R. "sprang up") and came to Jesus.

Jesus said unto him, **What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?** "He as well as the rest knew exactly what he sought, but for the sake of others in need, and for the sake of the man himself, Christ will elicit a still clearer prayer, and make the noble faith of the blind man shine forth."

The Blind Man: Lord, better as in Am. R., "Rabboni," My master, a title of special reverence. **That I might receive my sight.** This was the one great thing

he desired, for enfolded within it lay rich and countless blessings. No earthly gift was of value beside this.

Jesus said unto him, at the same time touching his eyes (Matt. 20:34), as a means of communicating the power, as an aid to the blind man's faith, and to show that the healing came from Him. Go thy way. Not necessarily a command to depart, but a token that his prayer was granted. Thy faith hath made thee whole. Complete, sound, nothing wanting to perfect physical manhood. "He had shown his faith, by calling on Jesus, by recognizing Him as the Messiah, by perseverance,

by his prayer, by following Jesus when cured. The cure of a man depended upon no uncertain or arbitrary movement of the feelings of Jesus. He was always ready to heal. No one was ever refused who asked Him. It rested with the man; the healing could not have its way and enter in, save the man would open his door. Hence the question, and the praise of the patient's faith."—MacDonald.

The Blind Man, Bartimeus, followed Jesus in the way. "He did not say to the blind man, 'Follow me'; yet he did it; love compelled him: he did not need a command. Unbidden, the healed one follows."—Bonar. "Glorifying God," as Luke adds (18:43), and joining the festal company of his Healer; who all likewise gave praise unto God for the miracle which they had witnessed. (Compare Acts 3:8-10.)

There are many interesting things connected with natural and spiritual blindness

that may be helpful even to the younger classes.

1. I live within a few miles of a great asylum, and it is wonderful how many things they learn to do. The Campfire Girls in our village and those at the Asylum have several times come together.

The progress in giving sight to the blind is very great. Read Helen Keller's story. Read in the Encyclopedia Britannica the wonderful things blind people have wrought.

2. *Spiritual Blindness.* Most children have read the story *Eyes and No Eyes*, or the similar German poem of the two boys returning from a tramp into the country, and each reporting what he saw, —

"The one with yawning made reply,
'What have we seen?' Not much have I!
Trees, meadows, mountains, groves, and streams,
Blue sky, and clouds, and sunny gleams.'

"The other, smiling, said the same;
But with face transfigured, and eyes aflame:
'Trees, meadows, mountains, groves, and streams,
Blue sky, and clouds, and sunny gleams!'"

(The first stanza should be read listlessly, and the second with much animation.)

3. People are sometimes so absorbed in pleasure, in business, in making money, that they do not see the value or the need of the higher life of service of God and man.

"A finger's breadth at hand may mar
A world of light in heaven afar;
A mote eclipse a glorious star."

4. Bunyan pictures a man with a muckrake so busy looking at his work in the ground that he never sees the angel holding a crown over his head; nor the Delectable Mountains, nor the Celestial City.

5. "A little boy was born blind. At last an operation was performed; the light was let in slowly. When, one day, his mother led him out-of-doors, and uncovered his eyes, and for the first time he saw the sky and earth, 'O! mother!' he cried, 'Why didn't you tell me it was so beautiful?'

"She burst into tears, and said, 'I tried to tell you, dear, but you could not understand me.'" That is the experience of some Christians who try to tell others the blessings of the Christian life.

6. *Mr. Titbottom's Spectacles.* George William Curtis published some years ago a volume entitled *Prue and I*. In it is a chapter called "Mr. Titbottom's

Spectacles." The magical quality of these spectacles was that, when their owner looked through them at people, he ceased to see people as they ordinarily appeared on the street; he saw their real essential character personified. Wonderful were the revelations that were made. He looked at one man and saw nothing but a ledger. Another was simply a billiard cue, another a bank bill, another a great hog, or a wolf, or a vulgar fraction. On the other hand, he saw the good that others failed to see. One of his school teachers was a deep well of living water in which he saw the stars. Another was a tropical garden full of fruits and flowers. In one woman's heart lay concealed in the depth of character great excellences like pearls at the bottom of the sea, little suspected by most, but perhaps love is nothing else than the sight of them by one person. Another, called an old maid, was a white lily, fresh, luminous, and fragrant still. Another's nature was a tropic in which the sun shone, and birds sang, and flowers bloomed forever. His wrinkled grandmother appeared as a Madonna, "and I have yet heard of no queen, no belle, no imperial beauty whom in grace, and brilliancy, and persuasive courtesy she might not have surpassed."

It is with some such vision that the angels often see in the child and the lowly possible saints and martyrs, men and women who shall change this world for the better, angels excelling in strength, with victors' crowns and harps of heavenly praise.

7. One great advantage of the *Boy Scouts* and the *Campfire Girls* is to open the eyes of the boys and girls to the many unnoticed natural objects around them. Then may they also "look through nature up to nature's God."

8. Not a few people need to have their eyes opened to the attractions of the Bible. Senator Albert J. Beveridge has written an inspiring little book, *The Bible as Good Reading*.

9. "Blind Bartimeus at the gates
Of Jericho in darkness waits;
He hears the crowd; — he hears a breath
Say, 'It is Christ of Nazareth!'
And calls in notes of agony,
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!
(Jesus, mercy have on me!)

"The thronging multitudes increase;
Blind Bartimeus, hold thy peace!"
But still, above the noisy crowd,
The beggar's cry is shrill and loud;
Until they say, 'He calleth thee!'
Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, φωνεῖ σε!
(Take courage, rise, he calleth thee!)

(The Greek lines are translated for the reader, who can skip the Greek.)

"Then saith the Christ, as silent stands
The crowd, 'What wilt thou at my hands?'
And he replies, 'Oh, give me light!
Rabbi, restore the blind man's sight!'
And Jesus answers, Ὑπαγε!
'Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!
(This faith of thine hath saved thee!)
'Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see,
In darkness and in misery,
Recall those mighty voices three:
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με!
Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, ὕπαγε!
'Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!
— Longfellow.

LESSON VII (XX). — May 19.

JESUS EXERCISING KINGLY AUTHORITY. — Mark 11: 1-33.

PRINT Mark 11: 15-18, 27-33.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.*
— MATT. 28: 18.

Devotional Readings: Rev. 5: 9-14; 7: 9-12.

Additional Material for Teachers: Matt. 21: 12-27; Luke 19: 45-20: 8. Compare John 2: 13-17; 12: 12-15.

Primary Topic: Jesus Riding into the City.

Lesson Material: Mark 11: 1-10.

Memory Verse: Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. — Mark 11: 9.

Junior Topic: The Triumphal Entry.

Lesson Material: Same as Primary.

Memory Verse: Same as Primary.

Intermediate Topic: Jesus and the Temple.

Additional Material: Luke 2: 22-38; John 2: 13-17.

Senior and Adult Topic: Christ the Lord of our Lives.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Introduce this Lesson by calling attention to the fact that the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem is one of the few instances which are reported in all four of the Gospels.

See that one of the older scholars is prepared to tell the story, while all the scholars have read each of the four records at least once.

In the class the whole story is told, while the other scholars make corrections and additions.

Another scholar is requested to give an account of a Roman Triumphal procession, from Harper's *Classical Dictionary*.

The Roman triumph was a solemn procession in which a victorious Roman general entered the city in a chariot drawn by four horses side by side.

These pageants were marshalled with extraordinary pomp and splendor, and presented a most gorgeous appearance. The temples were thrown open, garlands and flowers decorated every shrine and statue. The procession was led by the Senate and high officials, followed by trumpeters, and a long train of wagons loaded with the spoils of the enemy. Behind these followed the captives, while the rear was brought up by the whole body of the infantry, their spears adorned with laurel, shouting, "Io Triumphe," and singing hymns of praise, while the baser sort indulged in keen sarcasms and coarse ribaldry.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Sunday, April 2, A.D. 30, the day before the Jewish Sabbath, five days before the crucifixion. Passion Week.



Overlooking Jerusalem to Olivet.

Place. — On the west slope of the Mount of Olives, toward Jerusalem from Bethany; then in the streets of Jerusalem, and in the court of the temple.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

What was Christ's purpose in riding into Jerusalem? Show how each of the four actions described in this lesson were kingly deeds.

The value of enthusiasm in such an occasion as this. What was the object of spreading their clothes, and the palm branches?

The second Cleansing of the Temple: its purpose. Cursing the barren fig tree and its purpose.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Four Scenes in which Jesus Shows Himself with Kingly Authority.

SCENE I. THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF JESUS, INTO JERUSALEM, HIS CAPITAL, Mk. II: I-II.

SCENE II. JESUS SHOWS HIS KINGLY POWER BY CLEANSING THE TEMPLE; Mk. II: 15-18.

SCENE III. THE STORY OF THE BARREN FIG TREE, Mk. II: 12-14, 20-26.

SCENE IV. CHRIST DEFENDS HIS AUTHORITY AGAINST THE ATTACKS OF HIS ENEMIES, Mk. II: 27-33.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on each of the four Gospels.

Harper's *Classical Dictionary* for an account of Roman Triumphal Processions. Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine* has a beautiful description of a triumphal procession.

See any good *Roman History* for the story of Pompey's triumph, and Caesar's.

See Robinson's *Researches*, I., 473, for modern illustration of spreading garments in the way for those the people would honor. *Land and Book*, new ed., vol. I., pp. 408-414.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

General Lew Wallace's *Ben Hur* gives a vivid description of the scenes and circumstances of this period of Christ's life. Robert Browning's *Poems*, "The Patriot," "It was roses, roses, all the way." Tissot's *Life of our Lord Jesus* has a number of brilliant and realistic pictures of these scenes, reproduced in colors from his series of paintings, with the text and de-

scriptions. Keble's *Christian Year*, "Christ Weeping over Jerusalem." N. P. Willis' *Poems*, "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem."

THE LESSON IN ART.

The Triumphal Entry, Deger,* Plock-hörst* (one of the best), Giotto, Doré (a

great painting), Dürer, in *The Little Passion*.

Christ Weeping over Jerusalem, Eastlake.*

Purification of the Temple, Hofmann.*

Christ Casting out the Money Changers, Kirchbuck.*

St. Stephen's Gate,* Jerusalem, through which Christ entered Jerusalem.

SCENE I. THE TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE, INTO JERUSALEM, HIS CAPITAL, Mk. II: 1-11.

JESUS PRESENTS HIMSELF AS THEIR KING AND PROMISED MESSIAH. HITHERTO HE HAD BEEN DOING KINGLY WORKS OF EVERY KIND, TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR THIS ANNOUNCEMENT JUST BEFORE HIS DEATH.

The Scene now begins on the Mount of Olives near the villages of Bethphage ("House of Figs" or "Fig-town") and Bethany ("House of Dates").

It is Sunday Morning, the day after the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday). Great crowds were thronging the road on their way to Jerusalem to attend the Passover, soon to be celebrated. At Bethphage Jesus mounted a young ass (described in Mark II: 1-6), borrowed for the occasion, and rode along the path to Jerusalem. This is the only time that the Gospels speak of Jesus as riding.

Note. Riding on an ass instead of a horse presented him as the PRINCE OF PEACE, not a hero of war. The horse was used especially for war, for dignity, or for display; the ass for the common uses of peace. His kingdom will be one of peace through righteousness.

"The rich man's ass is a lordly beast. In size he is far ahead of anything of this kind we see here at home. His livery is shiny black, satiny white, or sleek mouse color." — *Zincke's Egypt*.

The Prophecy, from Isa. 62: 11; and Zech. 9: 9. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass (Matt. 21: 4, 5).

And many spread their garments in the way. The garments were their outer abbas, loose blankets or cloaks, worn over the tunic or shirt. These acts were somewhat on the principle that actuated the heart of young Sir Walter Raleigh, when, on Queen Elizabeth coming to a miry part of the road, and hesitating for an instant how to step across, he "took off his new plush mantle, and spread it on the ground. Her majesty trod gently over the fair foot-cloth." — *Morison*.

And other branches which they had cut from the fields (Am. R.) "The Greek word is used for any layer of leaves, twigs, bushes, and the like, used for bedding, or to make a road easy to travel." Which they had cut from the fields (Am. R.) by the roadside. John adds "branches of palm trees." Hence the anniversary of this event is called Palm Sunday. All this was a royal honor to the king.

The imperfect tense denotes continued action. "As Jesus advanced, they kept cutting branches and spreading them, and the multitude kept crying Hosanna in the Highest. In the highest degree; in the highest strains; in the highest heavens. Putting together all the records, we see how manifold were the shouts of triumph. "Hosanna." "Hosanna to the Son of David." "Blessed is he . . . Blessed is the King . . . Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the name of the Lord." "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." "Hosanna in the highest." They were mostly taken from the 118th Psalm.



From a photograph.

A Syrian Ass and the Foal of an Ass.

Jesus Weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19: 41-44). As they sweep around the shoulder of the Mount of Olives, the glories of Jerusalem in all its splendor burst upon Jesus' view. "It rose terrace upon terrace, a city of palaces, with frowning towers and magnificent gardens," and before all the golden dome of the temple. Here, though others shouted, his own soul was full of sorrow, and he wept over the city. In the summer of A.D. 70, forty years after this, Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple was burned and laid in ruins by the Roman army under Titus, after the most terrible siege on record.

Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed because the Jews were unwilling to do right and obey God. But the fact was that only by the passing away of the Temple could Christianity gain its triumph.

The Invisible Procession. In spirit we can see accompanying him, like the invisible twelve legions of angels that were ready at his call, or the unseen armies that surrounded Elisha at Dothan, the vast multitude of those whom he had healed and saved, — those whom he had raised from the dead, those from whom he had cast out devils, the blind he had made to see, and the lame that now walked, the lepers he had cleansed, those who had been delivered from the bondage of their sins and brought into the light of the gospel, and all the angels who sang at his birth and rejoice when a sinner is brought to repentance.

The Triumphal Procession down the Ages. The triumphal procession of Christ is still going on, across continents and centuries; and it will continue, growing brighter, larger, more enthusiastic, till he enters the new Jerusalem as "King of kings and Lord of lords." Commerce, railroads, printing presses, inventions, wealth, civilization, are aiding his triumph, paving his way and advancing his glory. All are cast down before him on his onward march. And all the redeemed, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, are singing his hosannas, and joining in the song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5: 12, 13).

A Discordant Note in the Hosannas (Luke). Among the crowds, Luke tells us, there were some enemies, who objected to the whole proceeding, and they spoke to Jesus and asked him to rebuke his disciples. Jesus answered, "I tell you that if these shall hold their peace the stones will cry out." Real stones, as at the destruction of Jerusalem, whose tongues have never ceased to speak; and hearts as hard as stones.

Compare Antony in *Julius Cæsar*, who would

"put a tongue
In every wound of Cæsar that should move
The stones of Rome to rise in mutiny."

Stones of *Nineveh*, *Babylon*, *Egypt*, tombs and temples, still cry out the truth of God's Word. It is one of the most wonderful

providences of God that so many stones of the early past have been hidden for many centuries, and now in the recent centuries have been proving the Bible to be true. The stones of Pompeii are now, after centuries of burial, showing us exactly things as they existed in Christ's time.

Illustration from the Hittite Stone. The missionary Williams discovered about 1872, in Hamath, Syria, about 150 miles north of Hazor, the capital city of Jabin and Sisera, a sacred stone with Hittite inscriptions proving the existence of the



Two Parts of the Hittite Stone found near Restan.

ancient race of Hittites, for many centuries unknown to history, inasmuch that many believed that the Bible story of the Hittites was legendary. This stone was with great difficulty purchased for a museum, and was being carted away to the Euphrates to be shipped, when there occurred an unusual display of November meteors. This frightened the people of Hamath; they thought that God was angry with them for

selling the sacred stone, and that he was throwing the stars around in his wrath. They sent a deputation after the stone and demanded its return. The old Turk who had it in charge, after a long conference, told them that they had completely misunderstood the meaning of the falling stars; that so far from expressing God's anger, they meant, on the contrary, that God was so glad on account of their self-denial in yielding the stone to science that he was setting off fireworks in heaven for joy.

The Children's Echo of the Hosannas. The next day Jesus returned to the Temple, as we shall see. But one event on that occasion completes the picture of this Sunday's events. The children took up the chant-songs of the day before, and in the Temple court were crying, "Hosanna to the son of David," so that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." It is a great thing for the church to have the children join in their services. The children and young people should be first in the care, the arrangements, the training, the planning of the church.

"An angel paused in his onward flight,
With a seed of love and truth and right,
And said, 'Oh, where can this seed be sown
Where 'twill yield most fruit when fully grown?
To whom can this precious seed be given
That it will bear most fruit for earth and heaven.'

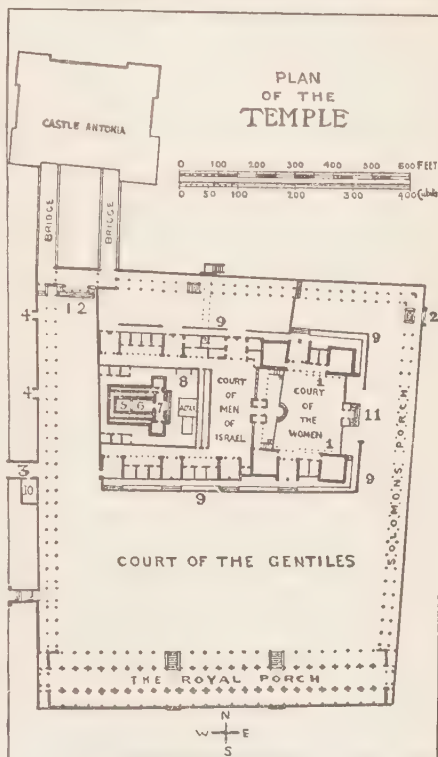
"The Saviour heard and said, as he smiled,
'Place it at once in the heart of a child.'
The angel whispered the blessed truth
To a weary teacher of precious youth.
Her face grew bright with heavenly light
As she led their thoughts in the ways of right."
— L. M.

SCENE II. JESUS CLEANSING THE TEMPLE AS ITS LORD. Mark 11:15-18; Matt. 21:12-16; Luke 19:45, 46. Jesus came into the Temple the next day, Monday, and on Tuesday spent nearly the whole day seeking to persuade the people that he was the Messiah King. To prove this he did the heroic and kingly act of cleansing the Temple from those things that marred its religious life and destroyed its sacred character.

In order to understand what Jesus saw as he entered we must realize certain facts.

1. The courts were crowded with visitors from all over the world, attending the chief annual festival of the Jews.

2. Every adult Israelite paid an annual Temple tax of a half-shekel; a Roman half-stater — 2 denarii or silver pence; Greek didrachma — 33 cents. But this tax must be paid in Jewish money, the shekel or half-shekel, and these coins were becoming scarce. Hence money-changers were required. Even the native Jews used Roman and Greek coins in their ordinary transactions. "The pilgrims brought with them the coinage of their own country — Syrian, Egyptian, Greek, as the case might be — and their money was either not current in Palestine, or, as being stamped with the symbols of heathen worship, could not be received into the corban, or treasury of the temple." This gave a great opportunity for extortion and dishonesty.



NUMERAL REFERENCE TO THE PLAN.

1. Money boxes on either side of the Court of the Women.
2. Golden Gate.
3. Gate with bridge across the Tyropean Valley to the street that led across the city to Jaffa Gate.
4. Gates to the commercial suburb.
5. Holy of Holies, containing the ark of the covenant.
6. Sanctuary, or Holy Place.
7. The porch.
8. The slaughter house for sacrifices.
9. The Soreg, or wall, for shutting out all Gentiles.
10. Council chamber of the Sanhedrim.
11. Gate Beautiful.
12. Steps to the castle and a portico.

15. And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16. And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.

17. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

3. Great numbers of oxen, sheep and doves were required for the sacrifices. Each family must bring for sacrifice a passover lamb, the sacrifices being slain in the inner court near the great altar. Those living near could bring their own sacrifices, but "worshippers coming from remote parts of the Holy Land, and from countries beyond, found it a convenience to be able to purchase on the spot the animals used in

sacrifice, and the material for various offerings — salt, meal, oil, frankincense."

4. Gradually all this business came to be done within the temple courts. The authorities not only connived at it, but drew a large revenue from rents and taxes. "The court was filled with a noisy assemblage. Dealers were advertising their stock in loud and lusty voices; buyers were wrangling and



Half-Shekel.

disputing, and the coarse shouts of the drovers added to the general uproar, while the clink of coins and the cries of animals rose above the din of the jostling crowd." — *Howard's Story of a Young Man*. "The haggling and chafering of a cattle market mingled with the sounds of prayer." — *Dods*.

5. The opportunities for fraud were very great. The dealers had a monopoly and could charge such prices as they pleased. They were trading with strangers who often did not know the true values of the merchandise. The great crowd made the overcharging much easier. The result was that the temple court became "a den of thieves" (Mark II: 17). Dishonesty in connection with religion does more harm than elsewhere. It creates unbelievers. It undermines the power of religion.

6. This place, made to be a house of prayer, the only place where outsiders could be reached by the religious influences of the temple worship, the missionary ground had become a Vanity Fair, an agricultural show, where all that the temple stood for was destroyed by the noise of the traffic, the disputing at the tables of the money changers, the shouting and wrangling in bargaining for cattle, the tramping of oxen and sheep, and all the noise and confusion of the market-place. Worship was out of the question; prayer was interrupted. And the very object of the temple was sacrificed to the greed of gain.

Jesus came as the Lord of the Temple to Destroy all these Wrongs. When Jesus entered the temple and saw this desecration of his Father's house — which he had seen many a time during his youth — his soul flamed with indignation. What he saw was contrary to all law, Jewish, Roman, and Divine, and what he did was patriotic toward all three kingdoms under which he lived.

15. He alone, unaided, began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple court, the sheep and oxen and those who trafficked in them. And overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, scattering the money on the marble pavement, thus stopping their traffic. And the seats of them that sold doves. The doves, being in cages, could not be overturned or driven out.

16. And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. There were corridors and passages provided for this service, but burdens were carried across the temple courts to save trouble.

17. And he taught . . . Is it not written (Isa. 56: 7) My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer or as in Am. R. "called a house of prayer for all the nations"; a more exact quotation from Isaiah. Ye have made it a den of thieves, better "robbers" as in Am. R.

How Was it Possible for Jesus to Succeed in This? Why did this great burly crowd of drovers, and soldiers, and elders in authority yield to the voice alone of a single young man?

18. And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

27. And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28. And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

Because they knew that they were in the wrong. "Conscience makes cowards of us all." Because they knew that God was on his side, and "one with God is a majority."

"Thus oft it haps that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;
A fool's wild speech confounds the wise
And proudest princes veil their eyes
Before their meanest slave."

Note how Jesus acted for the reform of the world. He did not spend his time in denunciations of the Roman or Jewish authorities before his disciples. He sometimes uttered "Woes," but it was to the face of the evil-doers. When he could reform a wrong he reformed it. When he saw sickness he cured it. When he met the devil or his demons, he overcame him and cast them out. He took hold of the great problems right at hand. He taught a few people in a small country.

Our first work is where we are, in our hearts, in our principles, in the things which we can touch, for which we can vote or act or teach.

One Example. A member of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia was once called upon by a committee on account of some trespass of their rules, when he related to them the following dream: "I dreamed that the whole Society of Friends were collected in our great meeting-house and attending to the business of the church. The subject under discussion was the filthy condition of the meeting-house and the means of cleansing it. Many plans were proposed and discussed by the prominent members, who sat in the upper seats; but none seemed likely to answer the purpose till one little man, who occupied a seat on the floor of the house, and had not taken part in the discussion, got up and said, 'Friends, I think that if each one of us would take a broom, and sweep immediately around his own seat, the meeting-house would be cleaned.'"

Better Engines and Hotter Fires. A railroad man was once asked what was the line of greatest improvement in railroads. His reply was, "Better engines and hotter fires." That is exactly what the churches and all reformers need to-day — better engines, equipment, means of working, and hotter fires of zeal, till it can be said of each one of us, "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."

Temples. Our bodies and souls should be temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3: 16).

Church buildings are temples, and should be perfect for their work, — devotional, attractive, with welcome for all, rich or poor; and filled with the spirit of love.

The Sunday School should also be a temple to God.

SCENE III. THE STORY OF THE BARREN FIG TREE, Mk. II: 12-14, 20-26. After the Triumphal Entry Jesus and his disciples returned to Bethany. The next morning, Monday, they were returning to the temple. Apparently they had started early without waiting for breakfast, and were hungry. Seeing a fig tree in the distance, he went to it expecting to find some figs for his hunger, but **he found nothing but leaves.** For the time, the usual season, of figs was not yet.

Jesus had reason to expect fruit on the tree, because of "the ostentatious show of leaves. The fig often comes with or even before the leaves, and especially on the early kind. If there was no fruit on this leafy tree, it might justly be condemned as barren." — *The Land and the Book.*

What the Leaves Do for the Tree. The leaves of every tree have their uses. They make the tree itself, each leaf sending a thread down to the roots, and these together make the trunk and branches, on which the fruit can grow. (See Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, vol. V.)

The next morning, Tuesday, the last day of Jesus' teaching in the temple, Peter, as he was walking with the other disciples, called attention to the fig tree, saying, **Master, Rabbi, Behold the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.**

29. And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30. The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

31. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32. But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Taking his point of contact from the wonder of the disciples at the withering of the barren fig tree, Jesus taught them a lesson on the power of faith and prayer. **Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith.** He repeats this in the next verse in another form. The mountain of course was a symbol of obstacles beyond the power of man to remove. The faith laid hold of God himself, made them co-partners with God. It was a faith that worked on and on untiringly, a faith that waited in patience.

This was fulfilled in the work of the disciples and their successors. They conquered the Roman Empire to Christianity, which has already removed greater obstacles than mountains.

And there are many mountains yet which must be cast into the sea, before the kingdom of God shall come on earth as it is in heaven. But it is coming.

Compare the state of things a few centuries ago with what is being accomplished by the Church of Christ; enough to give us courage and hope, and to make us more earnest and zealous than ever before.

Forgiveness of those who have injured us, v. 25, is mentioned here as one of the greatest and most difficult mountains to be removed.

SCENE IV. CHRIST DEFENDS HIS AUTHORITY AGAINST THE ATTACKS OF HIS ENEMIES, Mark 11 : 27-33. On this last Tuesday of Jesus' life-work, there took place a long series of Herculean labors to save the Jewish nation. The leaders were determined to pursue a course which led to certain ruin. Jesus strove to stem the tide, all day long, with every possible argument. In the temple courts, "The simple Galilean" met the Jewish authorities, arrayed "in all the pomp of official costume." There was a keen and prolonged controversy on puzzling questions, in answering which it would seem impossible for him to avoid the Scylla of treason to the Roman government or the Charybdis of the loss of all popular favor. "Hour by hour Jesus steadily met the attack." "Then he carried the war into their own territory. He silenced them, but their hearts would not yield. Then he let loose the storm of his indignation, and delivered against them the philippic which is recorded in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew." "He exposed their hypocritical practices in sentences that fell like strokes of lightning, and made them a scorn and a laughing stock, not only to the hearers then, but to all the world since." — *Stalker*. All this in order to crash through their bitter prejudices, and to cause them to see the yawning gulf before them, and turn and repent ere it was too late.

After the cleansing of the temple, the chief priests, scribes, and elders, those who were leaders, came to Jesus and demanded by what authority he took it upon himself to drive out the money changers, and the cattle, and the dealers in them from the temple. What authority had he to call himself the Messiah, and to oppose those who were the divinely appointed leaders in the ritual of a divinely authorized religion and temple?

It was useless to answer them by any statement of fact. They would have denied his authority, and made his claims a means of bringing him before the Roman Court. His deeds and teachings were known, and they could have learned his authority. Jesus therefore refused to answer, but **said unto them, I will also ask of you one question**, not to puzzle them, but to lead them to answer their own question in answering his.

30. **The baptism of John, was it from heaven or of (from) men?** That is, tell me what was John's authority for his teaching, represented by baptism, and I will tell you what mine is, for both are from the same source.

The rulers were afraid to express their opinion, and said they could not tell. They

33. And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

could not without making trouble for themselves, or answering themselves the question they asked Jesus. They were mere politicians, and not statesmen or patriots. They showed their insincerity.

Jesus therefore refused to answer their question, and they could not complain. The authorities did not dare to answer Jesus' question. To have done so would have aroused a conflict among themselves.

Why should Jesus tell them what his authority was, when it would awaken controversy, and do no good?

LESSON VIII (XXI). — May 26.

JESUS SILENCES HIS ADVERSARIES. — Mark 12:1-44.

PRINT Mark 12:28-34, 41-44.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.* — MARK 12:17.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 27.

Additional Material for Teachers: Matt. 21:23-26; 22:1-45.

Primary Topic: Jesus and the Widow's Gift.

Lesson Material: Mark 12:41-44.

Memory Verse: God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9:7.

Junior Topic: The Two Great Commandments.

Lesson Material: Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-37.

Memory Verses: Mark 12:29-31.

Senior and Adult Topic: Religion and Citizenship.

Additional Material: Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2; Mark 12:13-17.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"Give my compliments to your teacher. A teacher who *makes* her scholars prepare their Sunday School lessons during the week must be a very good teacher." "Well," she said, "I don't mean she *makes* us," thinking her way of stating it had reflected on the spirit of the teacher. "I don't mean she makes us get our lessons, but she teaches us so *that we love to get our lessons.*"

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

GENERAL SUBJECT: Jesus Silences His Adversaries; and New Light Shines from His Word.

- I. JESUS, AND THE WIDOW'S TWO MITES, Mk. 12:41-44.
- II. THE HERODIANS, AND THE PAYING OF TAXES, Mk. 12:13-17.
- III. THE SADDUCEES, AND THE RESURRECTION, Mk. 12:18-27.
- IV. A JEWISH LAWYER ASKS JESUS WHICH IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF ALL, Mk. 12:28-34.
- V. RELIGION AND CITIZENSHIP.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Tuesday, the last day of the public teaching of Jesus, April 4, A.D. 30.

Place. — In the courts of the temple. A series of discussions, questions, and parables.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

On eternal life, see Professor Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*; Guthrie's *Sermons*, "Eternal Life."

Notes on *The Parables* by Trench, Bruce, Taylor, Arnot, Dods, Guthrie. Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*.

All books on social questions, missions, and ways of reaching our suffering and sinful fellow-men; such as Booth's *Darkest England and the Way Out*; Riis' *How the Other Half Live*.

Professor Drummond's *The Greatest Thing in the World* (Pott & Co.). President Hopkins' *Law of Love and Love as Law* (Scribner's).

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

How do you apply the Parable of the Vineyard (Mk. 12: 1-11)?

Who were the Herodians?

What was the significance of their question as to paying taxes?

Apply "Render unto Caesar the thing that are Caesar's," etc.

The Sadducees and the resurrection.

How did Jesus answer this question?

The Two Commandments of Love.

Religious pretensions, while they devour widows' houses.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Christ and the Tribute Money, Titian,* in the Dresden Gallery, "which some have pronounced the most perfect pic-

ture he has produced." — *Miss Hurl.* Other pictures by Rubens, Van Dyck,* Rembrandt, Doré.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 1. *The American Commentary* (Amer. Baptist Pub. Soc.). Swete on the *Gospel according to Mark*, and many others.

Books of the Life of Christ.

Commentaries on the Synoptic Gospels; especially *The International Critical Commentary* on Mark and Luke (Scribner's); *The Teacher's Commentary* on Matthew by Dr. F. N. Peloubet (Oxford University Press).

I. JESUS AND THE WIDOW'S TWO MITES, Mark 12: 41-44.

Note that all the topics bring good subjects for all the grades, with special illustrations for particular grades.

Jesus was in the Court of the Women, *i.e.* the court beyond which, toward the inner sanctuary, women were not allowed to go. Here were thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles into which the worshippers deposited their offerings for the Temple service. The court was doubtless crowded; and every one then, as now on the Feast days, was offering his contribution. Jesus looking on saw among the rich who cast large amounts into the treasury a poor widow who put in two mites, the smallest copper coins in circulation, each one worth $\frac{1}{16}$ of a cent.

He called his disciples to him to take notice, and said unto them, verily I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than all they which are casting into the treasury: for they all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living (Am. R.).

"Among the rich givers might be some of the praying scribes who had imposed on widows by their show of piety." — *Exp. Grk. Test.*

Jesus taught his disciples that she of her want giving so small a sum, really, in the sight of God, gave more than all the rich, for it cost her a greater sacrifice, and was the expression of a larger and deeper love.

It was an illustration and example of how the poorest and weakest are not shut out from feeling and expressing a love as highly es-



The Widow's Mite.

Isida.

teemed by God as any one in the community.

The Measure of the Gift. The measure of a gift lies not in the largeness of the gift, but in the largeness of the love and sacrifice it expresses; not the size of the gift, but the cost to the giver; not the number of the sheaves, or of the measures of fruit, but the love and gratitude and faith that fills them. And in that great day when we present our fruits at the judgment seat, some large sheaves will grow larger by that measure, and some will shrink into a handful of half-grown stalks; and pebbles which the gatherer blushes to present as the only fruit from barren fields, will grow into gems and gold; and homely plants will be transformed into blossoms of Paradise; and the widow's mite will become a harp of gold; and a handful of grain become the seed of the Tree of Life.

Note. "Large givers may be illiberal, and liberal givers may not have much to

give; but it is the cheerful giver, the liberal soul, that God loveth. There is a beauty in the great gifts of the rich, if the heart is right; the kingdom of God needs them; but for the cheerful gifts of the poor, He has a peculiar tenderness." (See 2 Cor. 8:1-5; and 1 Cor. 13.) — *W. N. Clarke.*

The Sunday School and the Church are the chief places through which the children give to missions and other good causes.

The home and the Sunday School are the chief means of training the children to give, to those who most need the gifts.

Many schools and homes use Christmas more as a means of giving than of receiving.

If there are 16 millions of scholars and teachers, and each one gives one cent a week to the various causes that need help, as home and foreign missions, how much would be given in the course of the year? How much if they gave 5 cents a week?

Where the system of weekly offerings prevails, the children, even to the youngest, should have envelopes given them. In my early home, whatever amount was given to the cause presented, a part of the gift was put in the hands of each child for the purpose, in order that they might be trained in the habit of giving. It became natural to give. It is wise to arrange the plan so that every child may earn the money he or she gives.

Many of these as they grow more prosperous, will be able to do greater things for the cause of religion, and be of help to others in a multitude of ways.

There never has been a time when so much money was given, so many new ways of using it for the uplifting of the human race all over the world.

Illustration. A Baby's Wail Won a Four Million Dollar Gift for the Children of Boston. I have just been reading how \$4,000,000 have been given by four brothers for a free Dental Infirmary in the Fenway of Boston, for all children of the poor under 10 years old. It is crowded with those who have been greatly aided and saved from sickness.

Children's Day, now so commonly used for the children, is a great advantage, especially when one of the services is the giving of a good Bible to every Sunday School child who has been a regular attendant for a year.

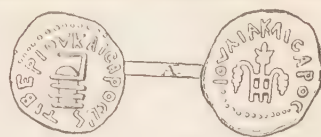
Illustration. A Cheerful Giver. "In a certain church a man regularly gave every Sabbath five dollars for the support of the church. A poor widow, who supported herself and six children by washing, was as regular as the rich man with her offering of five cents, which was all she could spare from her scant earnings. One day the rich man came to the minister and said the poor woman ought not to pay anything, and that he would pay the five cents for her every week. The pastor called to tell her of the offer, which he did in a considerate manner. Tears came to the widow's eyes as she replied: 'Do they want to take from me the comfort I experience in giving to the Lord? My health is good, my children keep well, and I receive so many blessings that I feel I could not live if I did not make my little offering to Jesus.' " — *The Christian.*

"A most valuable educational feature is the presence in the church service of the child with his little envelope to be placed upon the plate along with those of his father and mother. In our church a whole row of boys threatened never to come to church again because the collection plate was not passed to them one Sunday morning." — *Rev. L. W. Fildes.*

II. THE HERODIANS ASK JESUS WHETHER IT IS RIGHT FOR JEWS TO PAY TAXES TO THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT, Mk. 12:13-17. *The Herodians* were political, not religious, partisans of the Pharisees. "They were adherents of the Herod dynasty, and as such well content with Roman overlordship, but desirous of seeing one of this family over Judea in the place of the Roman procurator" (governor). They were in readiness to oppose and suppress any Messianic agitation of the people.

One of the matters most sorely perplexing to a Christian in apostolic times was his relation to his rulers. The vilest of idolatrous practices were upheld by the national authority. Paul was divinely led to give the wisest possible advice. "Let every soul," he wrote, "be subject to the higher powers. The powers that be are ordained of God."

The Leaders set a trap for Jesus that they might ensnare him in his talk. They first took counsel together, with this result, that they decided to send the Herodians,



Widow's Mite.

Actual size.

who were simply interested in political questions, and not in the religious discussions of the Pharisees, and hence seemed to be innocent of any intentions to entrap Jesus.

They did not appear themselves, but put forward some of their disciples, scholars (according to Matthew), who would come as those who wanted to learn, and not as the teachers who, being supposed to know, would appear to be merely wanting to entrap Jesus. "A cunning device." These would represent one side of the question, opposed to paying tribute to Cæsar.

They watched him, and sent forth spies, which feigned themselves to be righteous, so as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor (Luke, Am. R.).

14. And when they were come they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth.

The Question. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? (vs. 14, 15).

The Dilemma. In v. 14 the question is as to principle, — Shall we act on this principle at any cost? What shall we do about it? They expected an answer of yes or no. No matter which side Jesus took, it seemed impossible for him not to seriously damage his cause. If he decided for either party, the other would be his enemy. He was sailing between Scylla and Charybdis. If he said it was not right to pay taxes, he would be in collision with the whole Roman power, which would regard and treat him as a criminal. His career would be ended. If he said it was lawful for the Jews, the great mass of the people would be against him, and he would lose his hold upon them; for they hated the Roman government, and one of the first and greatest things they expected of the Messiah was deliverance from this subjection to a foreign power.

The Answer of Jesus, v. 15. Jesus saw through their plan, and bade them: bring me a penny, that I may see it. The silver penny was worth about 16 cents.

Jesus took the silver penny in his hand and showed it to the crowd around them, as a simple object-lesson, but very effective.



Silver Penny or Denarius of Tiberius.

Obverse: Head of Tiberius with the inscription *Ti Caesar Divi Aug F Augustus* (Tiberius Caesar the Son of the Deified Augustus himself Augustus).

Reverse: Seated figure with the words, *Pontif Maxim* (Pontifex Maximus).

16. Whose is this image. The emperor issuing the coin usually had his image stamped upon it; as is common in modern times. And superscription, the inscription upon the coin, the name and titles of the emperor. This seemed to be a very harmless action, with no bearing on the answer.

The Herodians' Reply. They said unto him, Cæsar's (pronounced by Romans and Greeks, Kaizar, same as the German Kaiser and Russian Czar).

Jesus' Unanswerable Reply. 17. Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. "The image and superscription on the coin implied the sovereignty of Cæsar. The Jews, by using the coins, in so far were served by the Roman government. They therefore owed it some service in return. This service was the paying of taxes." — *Prof. Shailer Mathews, The Social Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 118-120. They received very much more than this from the Roman government, in protection, in roads, etc. And even if they received them under protest, yet so long as they used these advantages, they should pay their part of the expense. The payment did not endorse the right of the government, but only the honesty of those who took benefits from it. "The things that are Cæsar's" included "not only the taxes, but everything to which Cæsar was entitled as a legitimate ruler." Christ's word meant, Fulfil your obligations to the State, since your very coins are coins of the State.

The Christian must be a good citizen. Good citizenship in no ways interferes with our religion. They are in two different spheres, and the more truly one is a Christian, the more perfectly will he serve the State. Politics is often an injury to the State. But any one who serves God truly, who obeys God's laws, who is righteous and honest, and lives according to the fruits of the Spirit, is the best citizen.

Turn to Deuteronomy 28. Verses 1-14 describe the good citizen, and the rest of the chapter describes those who break the laws of God and of the State.

"Sunday School politics are an iridescent dream" according to one who called himself a statesman. But they are the only dream that can be made real.

28. And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29. And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

30. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.

And they, the questioners, marvelled greatly at him — "at the way in which he had escaped the trap they had laid for him." — *Bible for Home and School*.

III. THE SADDUCEES AND THE RESURRECTION. vs. 18-27. The Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection from the dead, came to Jesus with a puzzling question. They made an imaginary picture which seemed to them to make the resurrection out of the question. But Jesus said, — you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God, for when they shall rise from the dead they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven. Thus he disposes of the imaginary picture.

The Argument. Jesus answers the position of the Sadducees, by the simple statement that God spake unto Moses, saying, — I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, who had died many centuries before. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Therefore there is a resurrection and life of the righteous dead.

See the Lesson on the Transfiguration, and Rev. 1; and 5:11-14; and 7:11-17.

IV. ONE OF THE SCRIBES. A JEWISH LAWYER, ASKS JESUS, WHAT COMMANDMENT IS THE FIRST OF ALL? vs. 28-34. The Herodians had asked Jesus a *political* question, that was dividing the nation; the Sadducees had asked him a *religious* question, on which the Pharisees and Sadducees took directly opposite sides with no small intensity of feeling. And Jesus had answered these questions with a wisdom and truth that astonished his hearers.

One of the scribes, a lawyer, had been watching the discussion with a keen interest. He was a sincere man, not far from the kingdom of God (v. 34). He saw how skillfully Jesus had parried the attacks of those who sought to entrap Him, and he sought Jesus to answer questions which had been puzzling him.

He was one whose life was devoted to studying and teaching the Jewish law as stated and exemplified in the Old Testament. There had naturally arisen many puzzling practical questions, concerning which Jewish scholars and teachers were divided in opinion, often with bitter intensity. This scribe perceiving that he had answered the previous questions well, proposed to ask some further questions. Matthew adds "tempting him," not in the sense of trying to get him into trouble, but with the desire to learn what he could do in solving a difficult problem which really puzzled the scribe.

The Question. Which is the first commandment of all? In Matthew the form is, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" The Greek word translated "which" is not the usual relative pronoun, "but poia, 'what sort of'" a commandment? It is a question not about an individual commandment, but about the qualities that determine greatness in the legal region.

The Preface. 29. Jesus states first the preface to the commandments in Deuteronomy (6:4): Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord, — the very words which every devout Jew recited twice every day; and which they inscribed on the parchment enclosed in their phylacteries, and wore on their foreheads and arms during prayer. Thus Jesus answered them from their own Bible, in words they regarded as supremely sacred.

30. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

One God. The discussions to prove the unity of God were many and long in the earlier studies of the Theological Seminaries; but now science has been able to prove with certainty the divine unity, and no one seems to doubt it.

One of the greatest services that science has done for religion is proof that there is but one God. The light from the stars so far away that it takes 4000 years to come from them to our world is the same kind of light that shines from our sun. Spectrum analysis shows that the sun is made of the same materials as the earth. The move-

31. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth : for there is one God ; and there is none other but he :

33. And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

ments of the planets are by the same laws of gravitation that rule in our world. So far as we can discover there is a unity of material, of force, of natural law, and of moral law throughout the universe.

"Love is a strong feeling of affection, a strong regard for." — *Century Dictionary*. God is the Being who has done more for us than all other beings or sources of blessing. We owe everything to Him. "The greatest thing in the world is Love," "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." "If you do this one thing, you will do these hundred and ten things without ever thinking about them."

In the 13th chapter of First Corinthians, verses 1-3, we see that some of the greatest things in the world, as oratory, knowledge, miracles, giving to the poor, martyrdom, fail whenever they do not proceed from the love of God. They have a selfish taint, unless they are the fruit of love, the first and great commandment.

How we should Love God. **With all thy heart.** "Heart denotes in general terms the affection and will ; affectionate choice, the love of conscious resolve, expressed with will, which must at once become a second nature." — *Cremer's Biblico-Theol. Lexicon*. "The heart is the centre of all physical and spiritual life, the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors." — *Thayer's N. T. Greek-Eng. Lexicon*. Our love to God must be fervent, warm, living.

And with all thy soul. "Soul is the individual existence, the person himself, the seat of the will, disposition, desires, character. The two words are united to teach that the entire, undivided person must share in that which it has to perform with the heart." — *Cremer's Biblico-Theol. Lexicon*. **With all thy mind.** This commands our intellectual nature : "Thou shalt put *intelligence* into thine affection," — in opposition to a blind devotion, or mere devoteeism. **With all thy strength.** "Enjoins the full and entire devotion of all these powers." — *Cook*. Love to God that is not supreme is not love at all. **This is the first commandment,** in order and importance. It is the foundation commandment. He that obeys this will necessarily obey all others. Obedience to it would turn our earth into a paradise. "The striving toward it, consciously or unconsciously, is the secret of all the civilization that has hitherto been realized." — *Morison*.

A Recent Platform. The modern Christian's duty as a citizen is :

1. To know about his nation's history, laws, rulers.
2. To obey the laws and get them obeyed.
3. To better the laws, if he can.
4. To elect good rulers, and support them.
5. To rebuke and oppose bad rulers.
6. To influence other citizens for good.
7. To train the young for noble citizenship.
8. To hate every vice, every oppression, to overthrow intemperance.

There is no limit to the number of ways in which we can cultivate and practise good citizenship.

Every virtue we cultivate gives new power.

"We all might do good where we often do ill ;
There's always a way, if we have but the will ;
For even a word, kindly breath'd or suppressed,
May guard off some pain, or give peace to some breast.

"We all might do good in a thousand small ways ;
Forbearing to flatter, yet giving due praise :
In spurning ill rumor, reproving wrong done,
And treating but kindly the heart we have won.

"We all might do good, whether lowly or great —
A deed is not judged by the purse or estate ;
If only a cup of cold water is giv'n,
Like the mite of the widow, 'tis something for heav'n."

34. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

38. And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and *love* salutations in the marketplaces,

39. And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40. Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41. And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43. And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44. For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

The Second is this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Your neighbors and yourself are to be loved in the same degree, and by the same standard, even if your neighbor is your enemy. It is another expression of the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." If you love your neighbor as yourself, you apply the Commandments in your conduct toward him as scrupulously as you wish him to apply them to you. You must not injure him or lie to him, or steal from him, or covet his success; you must treat him exactly as you in his place wish to be treated or ought to be treated by him.

It would be a good exercise to read over 1 Cor. 13: 4-7, and note the nine ingredients in the spectrum of Love.

1. "Patience — 'Love suffereth long.'
2. Kindness — 'And is kind.'
3. Generosity — 'Love envieth not.'
4. Humility — 'Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.'
5. Courtesy — 'Doth not behave itself unseemly.'
6. Unselfishness — 'Seeketh not her own.'

7. Good temper — 'Is not easily provoked.'
8. Guilelessness — 'Thinketh no evil.'
9. Sincerity — 'Rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth.'" — *From Professor Drummond's Greatest Thing in the World.*

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The angel raised its head
And with look made all of sweet accord,

Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!

— Leigh Hunt.

"Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do them beautifully." — *Philips Brooks*.

V. RELIGION AND CITIZENSHIP. Religion is the chief power in making good citizens. The two great commandments, when sincerely obeyed, demand that the citizens should treat all men according to the principles of these commands. If we really belong to the kingdom of heaven on earth, and cherish a true hope of a home in the city of God hereafter, then we must possess and cherish the spirit of loving our neighbor as ourselves, according to the definition of "neighbor" Jesus has given us. Both as individuals and as a nation we are to treat the poor, the despised, the outcast, the degraded, as our neighbors, and give them all possible aid,

and not pass them by on the other side. We are to treat the Indian as our neighbors; and the foreigners, including the Chinese, as our neighbors; and the colored race as our neighbors; and the prisoners, and the neglected, and ignorant, as our neighbors. Every town and city, every part of our nation, has some portion of this problem on their hands. Its only solution is that which Christ gives in this lesson, — **Love your neighbors as yourselves.**

LESSON IX (XXII). — June 2.

JESUS WARNS AND COMFORTS HIS FRIENDS.

— Mark 13:1-14:9.

PRINT Mark 14:1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.* — MARK 13:13.

Devotional Reading : Eph. 2:1-10.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 23:1-25:46; Luke 21:5-38; John 10:1-42; 11:47-57; 1 Thess. 5:1-24; 2 Thess. 2.

Primary Topic : Jesus among His Friends.

Lesson Material : Mark 14:3-9.

Memory Verse : She hath done what she could. — Mark 14:8.

Junior Topic : The Anointing at Bethany.

Memory Verses : Mark 14:8, 9.

Intermediate Topic : Our Best for Christ.

Senior and Adult Topic : How to Meet the Crises of Life.

INTRODUCTION.

Jesus had now come to the close of the last great day of his public teaching in the Temple. He had done all that could be done in seeking to persuade the people to accept him as the Messiah.

But he had yet many things to say to his disciples alone, after he had left the Temple, late on Tuesday afternoon, on his way to Bethany.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Jesus foretold the destruction of the Temple. Why did he not reveal when?

Describe the great tribulation.

How long after his resurrection did these things take place?

Why did he tell them to rejoice that their redemption draweth nigh?

What relation had the destruction of the Temple to the progress of Christianity?

Why did Jesus urge them to watch and pray?

By what three illustrations did he enforce this duty?

What hint did he give as to the time?

The supper with the Bethany family, and the anointing of Jesus.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Mark 13 was spoken on Tuesday, April 4, at the close of Jesus' public teaching.

The anointing of Jesus by Mary took

place on the previous Saturday evening, six days before the Passover.

Place. — In the city of Jerusalem, just after he had left the Temple, and on the way to Bethany.

The place of the anointing was at Bethany at the house of Simon.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Concerning the Destruction of the Temple. And the Supper at Bethany.

FIRST. VISIONS OF THE FUTURE, WITH WARNINGS AND HOPES.

Scene I. Vision of the Destruction of the Temple, 13:1-6.

Scene II. Vision of the Great Tribulation, 13:7-32.

Scene III. Watch and Pray, 13:33-37.

SECOND. THE BETHANY SUPPER, 14:1-9.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Milman's *History of the Jews*, vol. 2.
Dr. J. R. Miller's *Mary of Bethany*.
Jacox's *Sidelights on Scripture*, "Mary and Martha."
Ruskin's *Bible References*, p. 134, on Judas, and p. 183 on "The Poor Ye Always Have."
Green's *History of the English People*, on the time of the Wars of the Roses.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, "The Lamp of Sacrifice." Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, XXXII, "Her eyes are homes of silent prayer." Trench's *Poems*, "Dig channels for the stream of love." Margaret Preston's *Poems*, "Ante Mortem."

Alabaster Boxes, a leaflet, 5¢ a doz. (M. S. Munroe, 77 Bible House, N. Y.).

Professor Ely's *Social Law of Service*,

especially the last part of Chap. 4, "The Gifts of Love." Lowell's *Poems*, "Once to every man and nation."

THE LESSON IN ART.

Anointing Jesus, by Hofmann,* Rubens.*

Jesus in the House of Simon, Veronese.*
Bethany,* and the *Ruins of Mary's House*.*

FIRST. JESUS GIVES VISIONS OF THE FUTURE, WITH WARNINGS AND HOPES. SCENE I. VISION OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE, Mark 13: 1-6. It is Tuesday afternoon. Jesus' public ministry is closed. His last great day in the Temple is ended; his last warnings have been uttered; his last appeal made. All that can be done to save the nation has been done. And Jesus goes forth from the Temple never more to enter it.

The disciples paused awhile by the Temple, to show him the buildings, and the huge stones in the walls. "The Temple of Jerusalem was one of the wonders of the world." It is doubtful whether any other pile of sacred buildings on earth has

been to contemporaries so imposing as Herod's temple. Josephus, in his *Antiquities* (15: 11, 3), speaks of the stones of a certain part of the edifice, as being each, in length, 37-44 feet; in height, 12-14 feet; in breadth, about 18-21 feet. In his *Wars* (5: 5, 6), he speaks of some of the stones as nearly 70 feet in length. With its outbuildings it covered an area of over 19 acres, and was built of white marble.

As they stood gazing at these marvellous stones, one of his disciples, in the hearing of the others, saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here.

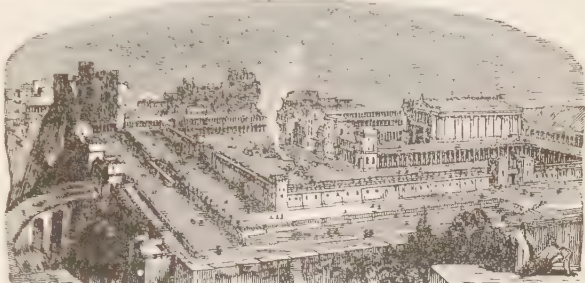
Jesus' Prophecy. And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

After this view of the Temple close at hand, Jesus and his disciples proceeded up the path on the Mount of Olives till they came to a resting place where the Temple and the city could be seen as a whole in all their glory. They were standing probably upon the exact spot where the famous tenth legion of the Roman soldiers who captured Jerusalem were encamped during the siege. The sun was setting, and the whole city, with the surrounding valleys and hillsides alive with the camps of pilgrims, lay beneath him in the evening light. The disciples called Jesus' attention to "those nine gates overlaid with gold and silver, and the one of solid Corinthian brass, yet more precious; those graceful and towering porches; . . . those alternate blocks of red and white marble, recalling the crest and hollow of the sea-waves; those vast clusters of golden grapes, each cluster as large as a man, which twined their splendid luxuriance over the golden doors." — *Farrar*.

The four fishermen, Peter, James, John, and Andrew, asked Jesus privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

Jesus did not answer definitely. No one knew exactly the time, or could know it. But the fact remained that the time was coming. And Jesus laid his emphasis on the duties to be done, and the dangers to be avoided, by the Christian community.

For many shall come in my name. The name of Messiah. Saying, I am Christ.



The Temple and its Courts.

From an old print.

The promised Messiah, the great Deliverer and King for whom the Jews were looking. During the years following Christ's death, and partly because the Christians were preaching that Jesus was the Messiah, the Messianic hopes of the Jews were at fever-heat; many enthusiasts arose and awakened false expectations, and drew large numbers after them. But they had no proof. They did not act like Jesus, the true Messiah. The disciples wanted light on their dark path, aids to their faith, signs to guide their conduct amid the many dangers and difficulties before them.

But within forty years all he foretold came true. The prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. Jerusalem was destroyed, the Temple laid waste, while some of the disciples were still living (Mk. 9 : 1). This was the proof to the disciples that Jesus was a true prophet and the divine Messiah.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !"

Watchman, — Tell us of the night, What its signs of promise are.

Traveller, — O'er yon mountain's height, See that glory beaming star?

Watchman, — Does its beauteous ray, Aught of joy or hope foretell?

Traveller, — Yes, it brings the day, Promised day of Israel.

Watchman, — Tell us of the night; Higher yet that star ascends!

Traveller, — Blessedness and light, Peace and truth its course portends.

Watchman, — Will its beams alone Gild the spot that gave them birth?

Traveller, — Ages are its own. See, — it bursts o'er all the earth!

Watchman, — Tell us of the night; for the morning seems to dawn.

Traveller, — Darkness takes its flight; Doubt and terror are withdrawn.

Watchman, — Let thy wanderings cease. Hie thee to thy quiet home.

Traveller, — Lo, the Prince of Peace, Lo, the Son of God has come !"

SCENE II. A VISION OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION, Mark 13 : 7-32. Jesus and the disciples are still sitting on the brow of Mt. Olivet, and Jesus is picturing the terrible tribulations that are to come upon Palestine. The time when they shall come is unknown, only they shall come suddenly, and while some of the disciples looking down upon the city shall still be living. This statement is made four times in the Gospels. "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. 16 : 28).

After the resurrection of Jesus, and Pentecost, the Christian religion spread rapidly through the civilized world. The growth of Christianity met with much opposition and persecution from the Roman powers. Moreover toward the end of the 40 years there were uprisings and revolts against the Roman power, till Rome sent her armies to crush Palestine, and destroy Jerusalem and the Temple.

This was an absolute necessity if Christianity would be the sole religion, and triumph over the world as the kingdom of Christ.

The Tribulations. Look over carefully the various trials and troubles named in chapter 13 and the parallels, during the siege of Jerusalem.

Josephus declares that "the misfortunes of all men, *from the beginning of the world*, if they be compared with those of the Jews, are not so terrible as theirs were," "nor did any age ever produce a generation more fruitful of wickedness *from the beginning of the world*."

"Four Roman emperors were murdered in swift succession." But especially in Palestine "the war fiend ran riot." The Jews themselves were divided into contending factions, who slew one another by thousands. The neighboring nations joined one party or the other. Then the Jews revolted against the Romans, and the Roman armies overran the whole country. Blood flowed like water.

"The horrors of war and sedition, of famine and pestilence, were such as exceeded all example or conception. The city was densely crowded by the multitudes which had come up to the Passover. Pestilence ensued, and famine followed. The commonest instincts of humanity were forgotten. Acts of violence and cruelty were perpetrated without compunction or remorse, and barbarities enacted which cannot be described. Mothers snatched the food from the mouths of their husbands and children, and one actually killed, roasted, and devoured her infant son. (Compare Lev. 26 : 29 ; Deut. 28 : 56, 57.) The besieged devoured even the filth in the streets ; and so excessive was the stench that it was necessary to hurl 600,000 corpses over the wall, while 97,000 captives were taken during the war, and more than 1,100,000 perished in the siege." This probably included those massacred throughout Palestine.

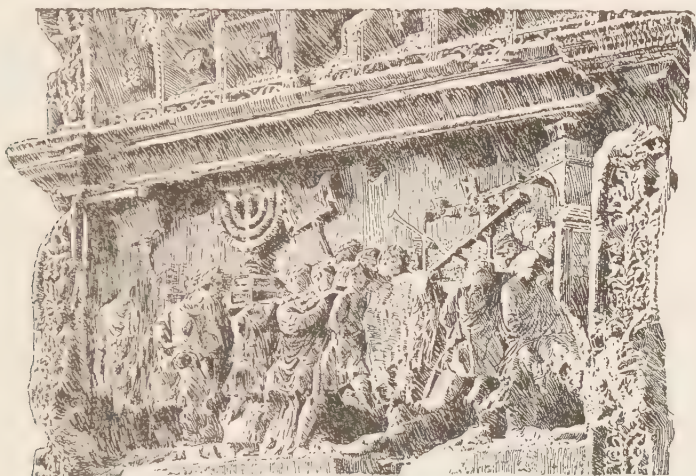
The words of Jesus were fulfilled when the hour struck, and Jerusalem was destroyed, and of the Temple not one stone remained upon another (Mark 13 : 2).

"So long as the world reads the words of Jesus, and behold these words fulfilled in Jerusalem, still trodden down of the Gentiles, and in the Jews still scattered and homeless among the nations, it has an argument for the infallibility of the Founder of Christianity, and for the truth of the religion proceeding forth from him and his teaching, which nothing can gainsay or resist." — *Monday Club Sermons*.

Modern and Ancient Wars. It is interesting to compare the two most awful wars in history, — The Destruction of Jerusalem in Palestine by the Romans, and the Great War that recently deluged nearly all of Europe.

Note 1. That God does not make wars, but on one side or the other there is a wrong. But God compels good to come out of the evil. Changes must come that will do for all the people what Mr. Asquith said of England, — that it will "refashion the empire fabric. The Irish question must be settled. Readjustment of internal relations will be necessary."

Note 2. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans gave Christianity an opportunity for growth unhindered by the Jewish rituals and cere-



Arch of Titus, Rome.

Erected to commemorate the victory gained by Titus over the Jews, at the time the temple was destroyed, A.D. 70.

monies, that had stood in the way. It resulted very much as the captivity to Babylon, when the Temple was destroyed 600 years B.C. Since then the Jews have been a people scattered over the world, a race without a country. But it is probable that ere long the Jew will have possession of Palestine as a central home, according to the prophecies, when they are able to realize that Jesus was a Jew, and that Christianity does not compel them to give up their peculiar religious rites, provided that they accept Jesus as their King and Saviour, and obey his principles of righteousness, as was the case in the days of the apostles.

Note 3. Contrasting the present conditions with those in ancient Rome, there has been a far greater development in the spiritual and moral warfare against principalities and powers of evil, than in physical warfare. The Christian Church has never before so earnestly "put on the whole armor of God," "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." But so many battles are yet to be fought and won, that we need all the power of God to be victors.

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes on forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

* * * * *

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose party thou shalt stand?"

AFTER two days was *the feast of the passover*, and of unleavened bread : and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.

2. But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.

SCENE III. WATCH AND PRAY, Mark 13 : 33-37. Take ye heed, watch and pray : for ye know not when the time is. And what I say unto you I say unto you all, Watch.

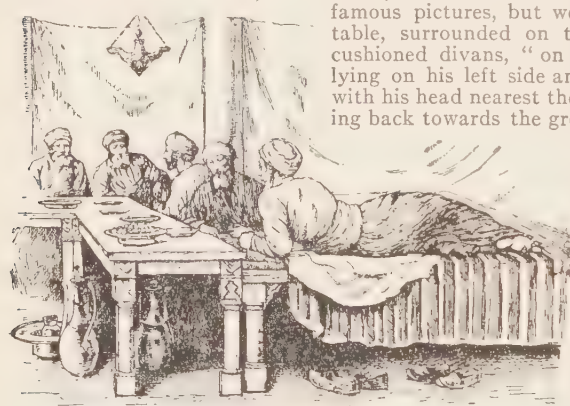
Against What to Watch. The moral dangers and temptations which grow out of the times. There were to be wars, persecutions, great iniquities, false prophets, the love of saints even growing cold, fearful tribulation which could be typified only by the sun and moon darkened and the stars falling from heaven ; great changes and overturnings which seemed like the end of all things, but were in reality the springtime of the new kingdom.

So we are to watch against temptations from within and from without ; against pervading iniquities which fill the air with moral malaria, or chill the piety of even the church ; against failure in duty ; against the loss of the warmth of first love ; against the day of death and of judgment, so as to be prepared for them when they come.

For an illustration study the parable of the Ten Virgins, Matt. 25 : 1-13. Look around you among the people you see and know, and study how they watch, and with what results.

SECOND. A SERIES OF WORD PICTURES OF JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES AT SUPPER WITH HIS BETHANY FRIENDS. Mark 14 : 1-9. *The Supper* was on Saturday evening, April 1, A.D. 30, at the close of their sabbath, after sunset. It was six days before the crucifixion.

The supper was like our evening dinner, the chief meal of the day. We must not think of a modern table, with chairs, as this scene is represented in many of the



Oriental Mode of Reclining at Meals.

and fish are common, the extent of their use being determined by the occupation and condition of a family."

The Guests. Simon the leper was the host as the supper was held in his house. Simon had probably been cured by Jesus. Jesus was the guest of honor, and with Him were His twelve disciples ; Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead, his two sisters Mary and Martha ; and probably friends and leading men.

"They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy." — *Milton*.

Looking upon the scene were " the common people," probably those who had come to attend the Passover. In Oriental fashion they gathered in the house to look on, attracted by the desire to see Jesus, the great prophet, and the man whom He had raised from the dead (John 12 : 9).

3. And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

4. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5. For it might have been sold for more then three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

The Eternal Fragrance of a Beautiful Deed. . . . There came a woman, Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus (not Mary Magdalene, not the woman "who was a sinner," who anointed Jesus' feet in the Pharisee's house). Having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious. John says there was a pound of it, very costly (John 12: 3). It was a Greek pound, 11½ oz. Avoir.

Alabaster box, Am. R. "cruse." "Literally, an alabaster, just as we would call a drinking vessel made of glass a glass. Pliny compares these vessels to a closed rosebud." — *M. R. Vincent, Word Studies*. These alabasters were usually made of the Oriental or onyx alabaster, with long narrow necks, which let the oil escape drop by drop, and could easily be broken.

Spikenard, literally "pistic nard," "pistic" meaning either "genuine" or "liquid." Am. R. "of pure nard very costly." It was *pure nard*, like attar of roses, unadulterated, in full strength.

According to Mark and John it was worth 300 pence — denarii, each worth a little more than 16 cents — hence about \$50, but that was then the value of a whole year's work of one man, at a penny (denarius) a day; worth at least \$300 to \$400 to-day.

Compare the attar of roses, made at Ghazipoor in Hindustan, and which requires 400,000 full-grown roses to produce one ounce. The *Century Dictionary* says it takes 150 pounds of roses to make an ounce of attar.

Mary poured this ointment on Jesus' head, and his feet (John), and wiped his feet with her hair (John). And the house was filled with the odor of the ointment (John).

Mary's Purpose. This act of Mary's was the expression of her love and devotion to her Saviour. No words could express her feelings. No common deed could tell him how deep was her gratitude, how strong her desire to honor him, how loving her sympathy, how great was her faith in him, as the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world.

Why this Waste? 4. And there were some that had indignation within (Am. R. "among") themselves, and said, Why (Am. R. "To what purpose") was this waste of the ointment made? It is not said that the disciples (except Judas) had indignation, but rather some of the on-lookers who found fault. But John tells us only that it was one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, who should betray Him, that was indignant, and said, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein (John 12). Think of throwing away a whole year's income on perfumes that would fall on one person and last only one evening!

And they murmured against her. The Greek word translated "murmured" has also a much stronger meaning. The *Int. Crit. Com.* translates it "were very angry."

Jesus Defends Mary in two ways. 1. Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me. . . . She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

2. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

Mary's Reward, — *Perpetual Usefulness*. 1. Whosoever this gospel shall be preached . . . this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. This story of Mary's sacrifice has been told in more than 500 languages, and to every great nation in the world.

2. The more we care for the Master the more we will do for the poor, for the poor are left in his stead, and through them would be expressed the increased love of the Master. All gifts to Christ which increase our love will increase our gifts to the poor.

7. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

A CHORUS OF ODORS FROM MARY'S ALABASTER BOX.

1. We are told in the *Britannica* that the late Dr. Septimus Piesse "endeavored to show that a certain scale or gamut existed among odors as among sounds, taking the sharp smells to correspond with high notes, and the heavy smells with low." "He asserted that to properly constitute a bouquet, the odors to be taken should correspond in the gamut like the notes of a musical chord."

Mary's loving deed filled the room with its fragrance, as a

Chorus in the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world." — *George Eliot*.

2. "It is not the deed we do
Though the deed be never so fair,
But the love that the dear God looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.

"The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told."

3. "Costliness is an external sign of love and obedience." "It is not the church we want, but the sacrifice; not the emotion of admiration, but the act of adoration; not the gift, but the giving." — *Ruskin*.

4. Mary not only anointed Jesus but she took "woman's chief ornament," and devoted it to wiping the travel-stained feet of her teacher. She devoted the best she had to even the least honorable service for him. She was bashful and retiring, and could not speak her feelings, and therefore she expressed them in this way.

5. "Had I but heard
One breath of applause, one cheering word —
One cry of 'Courage!' amid the strife,
So weighted for me with death or life —
How would it have nerved my soul to strain
Thro' the whirl of the coming surge again.
- "What use for the rope, if it be not flung
Till the swimmer's grasp to the rock has clung?
What worth is Eulogy's blandest breath
When whispered in ears that are hushed in death?
No! no! if you have but a word of cheer,
Speak it while I am alive to hear." — *Margaret Preston*.

6. The gift of Mary direct to Christ did a hundredfold more for the poor than if she had given the same amount directly to them. It is the want of *love*, not the want of money, that allows any poor to suffer.

7. "The sweetest perfume that the home circle ever knows rises from deeds of loving sacrifice which its members do for each other."

8. An original writer says: "If my friends have alabaster boxes full of the fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them."

9. *The Banquet of the Wise*. A Greek writer represents a number of the most eminent men of Rome gathered as guests at a banquet in the house of one of them. The writer calls it "The Banquet of the Wise." Far more truly was the supper at Bethany, with Jesus the chief guest, A Banquet of the Wise, where

"They eat and drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy." — *Milton*.

LESSON X (XXIII). — June 9.

JESUS FACES BETRAYAL AND DENIAL. — Mark 14:10-72.

PRINT Mark 14:17-26.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* — Mk. 14:38.

Devotional Reading : John 15:1-17.

Additional Material for Teachers : Matt. 26:20-29; 10:16; Luke 22:17-20;
John 13:1-35; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

Primary Topic : Jesus and His Disciples.

Lesson Material : Mark 14:12-26.

Memory Verse : This do in remembrance of me. — Luke 22:19.

Junior Topic : Jesus Betrayed and Denied.

Memory Verse : 1 John 3:16.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic : Tests of Loyalty to Christ.

INTRODUCTION.

The teacher should present this lesson to his scholars in its series of scenes, as a living reality acted and spoken before them. It is full of tenderness and love. It belongs to each soul. One scene after another passes before us, each with its own message to our hearts. It is like the last meeting at the death-bed of a beloved friend, who pours out his very heart to us as he sees the earthly life in the light of heaven.

See that your scholars study the lesson in all four Gospels, which is best done in some one of numerous harmonies of the Life of Christ.

At the same time, it is possible to dwell only on the main themes, and touch but lightly on many other questions.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Thursday, April 6, the evening and the whole night. According to Jewish reckoning it was the beginning of Friday.

Place. — The Mount of Olives and the city of Jerusalem. A friend's house, in the upper room.

Place in the Life of Christ. — The evening before his crucifixion.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

How could it be possible for Judas to betray his

Master for money?

The Passover Feast.

Why Jesus washed his disciples' feet.

The object and meaning of the Lord's Supper.

The prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane.

What could possibly tempt Peter to deny his Lord?

How was he restored?

Contrast Judas, the betrayer, with Peter, the denier.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jesus Faces Betrayal and Denial.

SCENE I. JUDAS BEGINS HIS BRIEF CAREER AS THE BETRAYER OF HIS LORD, Mk. 14:10, 11.

SCENE II. AT THE PASSOVER FEAST.

The Celebration of the Passover, 14:12-21.

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet, John 13.

Judas, — Is it I?

SCENE III. THE LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED, 14:22-25.

Judas, again.

SCENE IV. JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, 14:26, 32-42.

SCENE V. JUDAS THE BETRAYER MAKES A COSTLY BARGAIN, 14:43-53.

SCENE VI. PETER DENIES HIS LORD, 14:54, 66-72.

SCENE VII. PETER RESTORED AND FORGIVEN, John 21.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

For the Passover, see *The Passover Service* as now conducted by the Jews (25¢, Bloch Pub. Co., N. Y.). Edersheim's *Life of Christ and Temple and Its Services*, pp. 177-231.

Dr. Trumbull's *The Covenant of Salt* (Scribner's) and his *Blood Covenant* (Scribner's) are unusually helpful in understanding the Lord's Supper. So is Prof. Richard Ely's *Social Law of Service*.

Phillips Brooks' *Sermons*, Series I., p. 277, "Lord, is it I?"

No better description of Gethsemane was ever written than that by Stanley in *Sinai and Palestine*.

THE LESSON IN ART.

The most noted picture is Da Vinci's *Last Supper** (at Milan). Raphael has three pictures of this scene. Others are by Tintoretto, Ghirlandajo, Andrea del Sarto,* Holbein, Rubens, Giotto, Bida,* Hofmann,* Roselli.

Jesus in Gethsemane, by Giotto, Bellini, Perugino,* Hofmann,* Correggio, Tintoretto, Ary Scheffer, Dolci,* Dürer, Van Dyck.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Trench's *Poems*, "The Suppliant," is an excellent illustration of this kind of answer to prayer. The poem by Procter, "Strive and Wait and Pray."

Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*, "Conscience." Browning's *Pippa Passes*.

In his *Inferno* Dante has placed Judas in the lowest circles as the sole sharer with Satan himself.

"Into the woods my Master went
Clean forspent, forspent;
Into the woods my Master came
Forspent with love and shame.

"Out of the woods my Master went,
And he was well content;
Out of the woods my Master came
Content with death and shame."

— Sidney Lanier.

A good illustration of the Oriental view of eating together is found in Scott's *Talisman*, "Saladin and the Templar." "The Holy Grail" in Tennyson, in Lowell.

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, "The Palace Beautiful." Poe's *Raven*, and the sad refrain of "Nevermore."

SCENE I. JUDAS BEGINS HIS BRIEF CAREER AS TRAITOR. Mark 14: 10, 11. *Judas Iscariot*, that is "from Kerieth" in Judah; thus distinguished from another of the Twelve named Judas (shortened to Jude), the writer of one of the Epistles.

He was the treasurer of the disciples, and had been gradually tempted to steal money in spite of his being a disciple under the influence of Jesus.

Judas was one of the guests at the supper at Bethany described in our last lesson. His character revealed itself when Mary poured her precious ointment upon the head and feet of Jesus, and he denounced the seeming waste of 300 pence (which he wished to put in his bag whence he could help himself as he had done before, John 12: 5, 6). Jesus reproved him. He was angry at the rebuke and the loss of the money; and went immediately to the chief priests, and made a bargain with them for money, to deliver Jesus to them at the first opportunity.

"It is not money, but the love of money, which is the root of all evil."

"Get Money, Money still;
And then let virtues follow, if they will."

We will trace the character of Judas all through the sad events that fill the hours of that eventful Thursday night, — Jesus' last hours with his disciples.

SCENE II. EVENTS AT THE PASSOVER FEAST. AN UPPER ROOM IN JERUSALEM. THURSDAY EVENING. Earlier in the day Jesus sent two of his disciples to arrange for the Passover Feast. One of his friends placed the guest chamber, a large upper room, at the disposal of Jesus and his disciples. The room was "furnished and prepared," and the two made ready the Passover. The Passover meal was the greatest festival of the Jewish year, for it was the anniversary of the birth of the Jewish nation, their redemption from bondage, deep repentance from sin, the oath of allegiance to their Redeemer, a prophecy of complete redemption. *The Passover Service* (Bloch Pub. Co., N. Y.) gives the following articles of food, —

- (a) Three unleavened cakes.
- (b) The roasted bone of a lamb.
- (c) A roasted egg.
- (d) Bitter herbs (horseradish).
- (e) A dish of 'haroseth (a compound of apples, almonds, raisins, and cinnamon).
- (f) Parsley.
- (g) A dish of salt water or vinegar.
- (h) A cup of light wine placed at each plate.

In the evening Jesus went with the Twelve to the upper room.

JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET. For some time they walked and talked before they took their places at the table.

In the meantime their feet were soiled and dusty from their long walk to the city. Near at hand were the bowl and pitcher and towel for washing the feet, but no one used them.

17. And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is it I?* and another said, *Is it I?*

20. And he answered and said unto them, *It is one of the twelve, that dippeeth with me in the dish.*

Why? Because it was almost impossible for one to wash his own feet, with those implements, and especially in the reclining posture at the table. There was no servant to do it for them, and they must do it for one another, or not at all.

Hence there arose a contention among the disciples as to which of them were accounted greatest, and therefore should have their feet washed by the others (Luke 22: 24).

Peter, James, and John had special work given to them, — because they were better fitted than the others, as in some cases of sickness, and in the Transfiguration. Will they wash the feet of Judas? Does Thomas wish to wash the feet of Peter or Philip? They were all alike disciples.

Hence they all reclined at the upper table, with unwashed feet, direct from the dusty or muddy road, for sandals were ineffectual against the dust and heat of an Eastern climate.

Jesus wisely waited till all were seated. They had made their choice both as to feet-washing and as to places at the table. They had had time to cool their excited feelings, and to repent of their selfish neglect. Then Jesus, their Lord and Master, took up the duty. He rose from the supper table, laid aside his outer garments, girded himself, and washed the feet of all the disciples.

The Lesson He Taught by this Object Lesson. Jesus said unto them, "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13: 12-15).

Jesus' act was not a mere form, but the performance of a needed duty. To go through a ceremonial of washing others' feet, as on Thursday in Holy Week in Rome the Pope "washes the feet of a few aged paupers, after due private preparation, in the presence of the proudest rank," is not doing as Christ did at this time.

Love to God and love to men transfigure the commonest service, as a gray and dreary cloud is transfigured by the rays of the setting sun. Much that a mother does for her child, a doctor or nurse for his patients, is very lowly service, that would be hard and repulsive but for love. It was such service that has made the names of Florence Nightingale, John Howard, and many others shine like stars in the sky.

Picture. Murillo's famous painting of the *Angels in the Kitchen*, also called "The Miracle of San Diego," in the Louvre.

IF THE DEAR LORD SHOULD SEND AN ANGEL DOWN.

"If the dear Lord should send an angel down,
A seraph radiant in the robes of light,
To do some menial service in our streets,
As breaking stone, we'll say, from morn till night, —
Think you the faintest blush would rise
To mar the whiteness of his holy face?
Think you a thought of discontent would find
Within his perfect heart abiding-place?

"I love to think the sweet will of his God
Would seem as gracious in a seraph's eyes
In the dark, miry, crowded lanes of earth
As in the ambrosial bowers of Paradise:
That those fair hands which lately swept the lyre
Would not against their lowly work rebel,
But as they ever wrought His will in heaven,
Would work it here as faithfully and well." — *Anon.*

Judas again. While the disciples were eating, Jesus said: Verily I say unto you, **One of you shall betray me.**

This was sad news; and one by one they say unto him, *Is it I?*

21. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22. And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

Judas himself, last of all, said faintly, "Is it I" (Matt.).

Judas had already agreed to betray him for thirty pieces of silver; but this announcement (1) gave Judas opportunity to repent. (2) "The words would seem to have been intentionally vague, as if to rouse some of those who heard them to self-questioning," whether by their contention they were not in danger of falling. (3) The announcement favored the disciples; Jesus was not taken by surprise, but knew all that was before him. It was part of the great plan of redemption, foretold ages before (v. 23).

SCENE III. THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, THE BREAD.

The Passover ceremonies had been completed, except the singing of the hymn, but the disciples were leisurely eating, when Jesus took bread and blessed it ("gave thanks" (Luke), consecrated it), and brake it, and gave it to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body "which is given for you" (Luke). (Not "broken," for none of the evangelists state it so. But Paul uses "broken for you," according to many ancient authorities.)

The celebration of the Lord's Supper has been essential to the progress and success of the Church down the ages.

And this fact is one of the strongest reasons why every true Christian should join some church as an active member.



Judas Accepting the Thirty Pieces of Silver.

This do in remembrance of me (Luke). As we take the bread at the communion table, and bow our heads in prayer, this should be our petition, that these truths shall become part of our natures, that we may have grace to live according to them in an everlasting bond of brotherly love, and in an everlasting covenant of life, love and spiritual union with Christ.

The literal eating of Christ's body would be of no value whatever. We are not changed into what we eat. "What lion eats becomes lion." Epictetus says that sheep eat grass, but it is wool that grows on their backs. We are not made holier by the best of food, even angels' food, or "the ambrosia and nectar of the gods." And a literal eating would degrade to a mere form a glorious and vital spiritual truth.

The Bread teaches that Christ is the food of the soul. "As our food makes our bodies what they are, and becomes in us bones and flesh and sinew and blood; as our intellectual food makes our minds what they are, so our spiritual companionship makes our spirits what they are."

"I know of no discordant note among educators in the testimony that 'the greatest thing a teacher ever brings to a child is not the subject-matter, but the uplift which comes from heart contact with a great personality.'"

Illustration. Charles Reed, M.P., of England, said that he had in his library an old book describing the various sects of religion. The book belonged to his grandmother, and she had drawn on the flyleaf a rough diagram of a circle, with lines drawn from the circumferences like spokes in a wheel. On these converging lines she had written the names of the various sects, with Christ at the center; and underneath all, this legend: "The nearer to Christ, the nearer to each other."

23. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

24. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

THE CUP. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it, Mk. 14 : 23. Saying, "This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many."

Nowhere in the accounts of the Lord's Supper is the word "wine" used, but "cup," "fruit of the vine," so that fresh, unfermented grape juice fulfils all the conditions of this observance, and is even a more perfect symbol than fermented wine.

One of the wonders of Christ's love, is that he could give thanks over the shedding of his own blood. How much more should we give thanks for that marvellous gift of his love, by which eternal life, the blessings of heaven, and everlasting communion with God become ours! **Drink ye all of it** (Matt.) in order that all might participate in the blessings which it symbolized.

The New Covenant was that God would renew and save all who believe in Jesus. It is the new promise to men, the new Gospel dispensation, in which God has used his perfect wisdom in seeking to save the world from sin. Which is shed for many. Multitudes, not merely a few, are to be saved by Christ. For the remission of sins (Matt.) including the forgiveness of sin, and the deliverance from the power of sin. Sin is to be put away entirely, so that the heart and life are clean and pure.

Souls grow by contact with other souls. The larger and fuller the spirit with whom we come in touch, and the more the points of contact, the more free and strong is our growth. Life kindles life, love awakens love, courage arouses courage, self-devotion inspires self-devotion, thought quickens thought. So that there is nothing

in the universe like abiding in Christ, seeing him, working with him, loving him, becoming acquainted with him, to promote the growth of our souls in every good.

Read Jesus' Farewell Discourses, recorded in John 14-17.

Peter Warned that he would deny thrice that he knew Jesus (Mark 14 : 27-31).

SCENE IV. JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, Mark 14 : 26, 32-42.

Jesus and his disciples remained in the upper room till quite late. Then they sang a hymn, and went out of the city to a garden

Garden of Gethsemane, and Road to Mount of Olives.

called Gethsemane, near the base of the Mount of Olives, by the brook Kidron. The garden was fenced in, and all entered. Eight disciples were placed near the gate as an outer guard. Judas was away guiding the priests to this frequent resort of Jesus and the Twelve.

Jesus said to the eight, "Sit ye here while I go yonder and pray" (Matt.). Taking with him Peter and James and John about a stone's throw into the Garden for human sympathy, he kneeled down and prayed, being **exceeding sorrowful even unto death.**

Jesus' Prayer. And he said, *Abba* (the very word Jesus used, in the vernacular of the Jews) **Father** (the translation of *Abba*). All things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

25. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Three times Jesus prayed the same prayer.

The cup represents the coming hours as holding all the agony and sorrow which were upon him and before him. The cup was full to overflowing.

Illustration. The most sensitive soul is often the bravest. A friend once called the attention of Napoleon to the blanched face of an officer as he was marching into battle, as showing that he was a coward. Napoleon replied that that man was the bravest officer in his army; for he saw clearly and felt keenly his danger, and yet went forward into the thickest of the battle.

A Warning to the Disciples. When Jesus returned to the disciples he found them sleeping from weariness. He made no direct reproof. But he spoke to Peter, who was in special danger, though he did not realize it. — Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst not thou watch one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation (Am. R.). Then he made for them this excuse, — The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak (Am. R.).

The Answer to Jesus' Prayer. (1) There appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him (Luke), for in his agony he sweat great drops of blood falling to the ground. So in the temptation at the beginning of his ministry an angel came and ministered unto him.

(2) He prayed that God's will be done, and God's will was done, and multitudes were saved during the ages that have followed.

(3) The third answer to prayer is the giving, not that which we ask for in the form we ask it, but the soul of our prayer, the thing we in our deepest hearts want, and would ask for if we saw all things as God sees them. If clearly before the vision of Jesus there had appeared two choices, the one of escape from the cross, but with that also the failure of his mission, the triumph of evil, the loss of unnumbered souls, no crown, no glory, no abiding on the right hand of God; and the other choice, that of the cross and its agony, but with it also the redemption of the world, the ineffable glory of God, the joys of millions of the saved, the crown of triumph over evil, who doubts which would have been his real, innermost prayer. His prayer was answered, for the cross was changed to a crown, Gethsemane into paradise, death into immortal glory.

SCENE V. JUDAS THE BETRAYER MAKES A COSTLY BARGAIN.

Jesus, after the third season of prayer, went to his waiting disciples, and said to them, The hour is come. Arise, let us be going: behold he that betrayeth me is at hand (Am. R.). It was about one o'clock, with the full moon of the Passover. Judas had made his bargain with the Jewish leaders for 30 pieces of silver, giving as a sign, that he whom he should kiss was the Jesus whom they were seeking. With Judas as leader, came from the city, along the valley of the Kidron, the brook that ran between the city and Gethsemane, a great multitude, including a band of Roman soldiers, Jewish officers, captains of the temple police, chief priests and elders, and their attendants, such as Malchus, followed by a multitude of people, with swords and staves, lanterns and torches and weapons. As the band reached the garden, Judas went somewhat in advance of them (Luke 22: 47), and reached Jesus just as he had roused the three disciples on guard after his third season of prayer, and the final victory. He saluted him, "Hail, Rabbi," so as to be heard by the rest, and not only kissed, but covered him with kisses, kissed him repeatedly, loudly, effusively, Matt. 26: 49, "he rained kisses upon him." — Prof. A. A. Wright.

Compare Shakespeare's account of Brutus killing Cæsar, his most intimate friend.

"For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel:

This was the most unkindest cut of all;

For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,

Ingratitude, more strong than traitor's arms,

Quite vanquished him; then burst his mighty heart."

The man who looked up in Jesus' face at the Passover and asked "Master, is it I?" had done his work. But when he saw what he had done, he was overwhelmed with remorse. He went to the elders, and threw down the thirty pieces of silver at their feet, — but they refused the gift of a traitor. He went out and hanged himself. In

Acts 1: 19, it is said that "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst." He probably hung himself to a branch of a tree overhanging the steep rocks, and either his girdle or the limb of the tree broke with his weight, and he fell down the precipice.

Illustration. "A Sabbath school teacher once remarked that he who buys the truth makes a good bargain, and inquired if any scholar recollected an instance in Scripture of any one making a bad bargain.

"I do," replied a boy. 'Esau made a bad bargain when he sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage.'

"A second said, 'Judas made a bad bargain when he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver.'

"A third replied, 'Ananias and Sapphira made a bad bargain when they sold their land and then told Peter a falsehood about it.'

"A fourth observed, 'Our Lord tells us that he makes a bad bargain who, to gain the whole world, loses his own soul.'"

SCENE VI. PETER'S DENIAL OF HIS LORD, Mk. 14: 54, 66-72.

After Judas had betrayed Jesus, Peter undertook to defend his Master with his sword, but in his excitement he missed his aim and cut off only the ear of a servant of the High Priest.

It was a brave, but rash act. Jesus rebuked Peter, for the act came near to destroying the kingdom he wanted to help.

1. Jesus did all he could to remedy the evil, for he healed the wound, as he had cured many during his ministry. This last act of healing is recorded only by the physician Luke (22: 51).

2. It was useless, for "they that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

3. It compromised Jesus' teaching that his was a spiritual and not a worldly kingdom.

4. If Peter had succeeded, the disciples would doubtless have been arrested for rebellion.

5. There was no need of Peter's rash act, for the Father could even now defend him "with twelve legions of angels" (Matt. 26: 53).

Peter and John followed afar off. But that way led to temptation. Mark 14: 54; John 18: 15.

In the Court of the High Priest. Here John, who was known to the High Priest, brought Peter from the cold night air into the court where he could warm himself by the fire. Here was a square paved courtyard open to the sky. Around this yard were various rooms of the palace, in one of which Jesus was being tried by members of the Sanhedrin, the chief Council.

The Three Denials, in answer to questions.

1. Peter denied before them all, "I neither know nor understand what thou sayest. I know him not."

— *And the cock crew.* —

2. Again he denied with an oath, "I know not the man."

3. And he began to curse and to swear, "I know not this man of whom ye speak."

— *Again the cock crew.* —

And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, —

And Peter remembered the Lord's warning, —

Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice.

— *And he went out and wept bitterly.* —



The Potter's Field.

Reputed to be the piece of ground purchased with the thirty pieces of silver rejected by Judas and converted into a burial-place for Jews not belonging to the city.

SCENE VII. PETER RESTORED AND FORGIVEN (John 21). Not long after Jesus' resurrection seven of the disciples were fishing in the Sea of Galilee, when they saw the resurrected Jesus on the shore, by a fire of coals, to which the seven were invited. After the breakfast Jesus said, —

Jesus. Simon Peter, son of John, lovest thou me more than these ?

Peter. Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

Jesus. Feed my lambs.

Jesus (a second time). Simon, son of John, lovest thou me ?

Peter. Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

Jesus. Shepherd my sheep.

Jesus (the third time). Simon, son of John, lovest thou me ?

Peter (grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me ?). Lord, thou knowest all things ; thou knowest that I love thee.

Jesus. Feed my sheep.

The words of Jesus show that He had restored Peter to the band of His disciples, and he was probably the most efficient. His bitter experience gave him new power.

"A diamond may fall into the mire, but it is a diamond still."

"If I could paint a portrait of Peter, I would write on every hair of his head, *forgiveness of sins.*" — *Luther.*

Feed my Lambs. "Children are the preface to the book of life." "An adult converted is a unit ; a child is a multiplication table."

LESSON XI (XXIV). — June 16.

JESUS ON THE CROSS. — Mark 15: 1-47.

PRINT Mark 15: 22-39.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Truly this man was the Son of God.* — MARK 15: 39.

Devotional Reading: Isa. 52: 13-53: 12.

Additional Material for Teachers. (Parallels) Matt. 27: 32-61; Luke 23: 26-56a; John 19: 16-42. Also Rom. 4: 25-5: 11; 1 Cor. 15: 1-3; 1 Pet. 2: 21-25.

Primary and Junior Topic: Jesus Gives His Life for Others.

Memory Verse: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15: 13.

Intermediate Topic: The Suffering Saviour.

Senior and Adult Topic: Christ Dying for our Sins.

Additional Material: See same for Teachers.

THE PATH TO THE LESSON.

Whenever a passage of Scripture touches my soul and sets it on fire, then I am prepared to kindle with it the souls of my pupils. Whenever I have studied a Scripture till in it I see a new meaning, till it inspires and uplifts me, makes me love God better, and my fellow-men, reveals to me a new vision of truth, then only am I best fitted to teach. Every powerful sermon is preached first to the minister himself ; and the same is true of the teacher.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Last Week, the story of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus (5 and 10 ¢ each. Hope Pub. Co.). Good to put in the hands of each Sunday School scholar. *The School of Calvary*, by Rev. Dr. J. H. Jowett. *The Teacher's Book of the Heroic Christ*, by J. L. Keedy. *The Seven Words from the Cross*, by W. Robertson Nicoll. *Professor Stalker's Trial and Death of Jesus*. *Professor Burton's Biblical Ideas of Atonement*. *The Atonement* by Professor Borden P. Bowne.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — April 7, A.D. 30.

The Trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin, from 1 o'clock to 6 A.M. of Friday.

The Trial before Pilate, from 6 to 9 o'clock.

The Crucifixion, from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.

Place. — The crucifixion on the hill Calvary, just outside the walls of Jerusalem on the north.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Whittier's *Poems*, "The Crucifixion."
Sidney Lanier's *Poems*, "The Crystal."
Hymn, "I saw the crowd in Pilate's hall." *Verba Crucis*, by T. C. McClelland. The poem *Losses*, by Frances Brown.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Ecce Homo, by Correggio, Cigoli, Guido Reni,* Ciseri,* Hofmann,* Benjamin West.

Jesus Bearing the Cross, Raphael, Hofmann,* Thiersch,* Doré.

Elevation of the Cross, Rubens, Rembrandt.

The Crucifixion, Rubens, Fra Angelico, Guido Reni, Hofmann,* Tintoretto, Munkacsy,* Burne-Jones.

At the Foot of the Cross, Bartolommeo, Correggio.

Darkness Coming over the Land, Gérôme.*

John Taking the Virgin Mary Home, Dobson, Ploekhöst.

Mater Dolorosa, Dolci.*

The Cross, Morris.*

The Descent from the Cross, Rubens,* Fra Angelico, Rembrandt.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The trial before Caiaphas. Verdict, "Death."
Trial before Pilate. "What shall I do with Jesus?"
Scenes at the Crucifixion.
Why was the death on the cross essential?
How could the death on the cross be the means of saving sinners?
The seven words from the cross.
The conversion of the robber, "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise."
The heroism of Jesus.
The three inscriptions over the cross.
Jesus the king.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Jesus Crucified Gives His Life for the Salvation of the World.

I. THE JEWISH TRIAL, Mark 14:55-65.

Their verdict, — "Death."

II. THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE, Mark 15:1-19.

The Verdict, — "I find no fault in this man," repeated six times.

III. SCENES AROUND THE CROSS.

THE SAD PROCESSION, vs. 20-22.

THE FIRST WORD FROM THE CROSS, Luke 23:34.

THE TITLE OVER THE CROSS, v. 26; Matt. 27:37; Luke 23:38;

John 19:19-22.

THE SECOND WORD, Luke 23:39-43.

THE THIRD WORD, John 19:25-27.

THE GREAT DARKNESS, v. 33.

THE FOURTH WORD, vs. 34-36.

THE FIFTH WORD, John 19:28, 29.

THE SIXTH WORD, John 19:30.

THE SEVENTH WORD, Luke 23:46.

LESSONS FROM THE CROSS OF JESUS.

In our last lesson we left Jesus surrounded by Roman soldiers, Jewish officers, chief priests, and a multitude with swords, staves, lanterns, torches, and weapons, in the full of the moon, on the way from Gethsemane to Caiaphas' palace in western Jerusalem.

I. THE JEWISH TRIAL was before the High Priests Annas and Caiaphas, and the Sanhedrin, during the early morning hours.

(During this trial Peter denied his Lord.)

The Verdict was DEATH, for blasphemy. Because he made himself the Son of God.

II. THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE was in Castle Antonia on the northwest corner of the temple area, overlooking Jerusalem. Some of the incidents in the trial are very suggestive.

Pilate, after hearing the Jews' accusations against Jesus, summoned him, and said unto him, **Art thou the King of the Jews?** (John 18:33). As they claim you pretend to be. In all four Gospels these are the first words of Pilate to Jesus, and in all four the emphasis is on *thou*. Dost THOU, forlorn, despised, poor, insignificant, claim to be King of the Jews? He answering said unto him, Thou sayest. "Quite so." "I accept your statement." This was repeated several times by Pilate in various forms: John 18:37; Mark 15:2, 9, 12; John 18:39; 19:14, 15, and the title over the cross.

Jesus had been accused of blasphemy, of disloyalty to Cæsar, of perverting the

people, of setting up a kingdom in opposition to Rome, forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar. All of these were untrue.

Jesus' Statement as to the Nature of His Kingdom. "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (John 19).

Jesus was king of the spiritual kingdom, in contrast with the worldly kingdom. Dr. Keedy's little book expresses the contrast.

1. *The Worldly Kingdom*, with thrones and crowns and armies. Jesus had the principles and powers of the Kingdom of Heaven, and a crown of thorns. He had power over disease and death and sin and righteousness.

2. Worldly kings have armies and soldiers and weapons to kill and destroy. Jesus has raised an army to fight against sin, ignorance, error, disease, wrongs, with such weapons as the Holy Spirit, preaching, healing, with all the armor described in Eph. 6, and all the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 22, 23).

To which kingdom do you belong?

Which kingdom is growing most rapidly, and is gaining the greatest victories?

Are you a soldier of the cross? What victories have you gained?

Jesus was king, not in the Roman sense, but in the spiritual sphere, and there was no political collision of these spheres, however the spiritual in time might enfold the political as an all-pervasive, health-giving atmosphere. "Cæsar's empire," says Professor Stalker, "is over the bodies of men; this is over their hearts. The strength of Cæsar's empire is in soldiers, arms, citadels, and navies; the strength



Fetters, Scourge, and Crown of Thorns.

of this kingdom is in principles, sentiments, ideas."

Pilate's Verdict from the Trial. At least six times during the trial did Pilate pronounce Jesus innocent of the charges brought against Him.

Luke 23: 4, "I find no fault in this man."

Luke 23: 14, "Having examined him before you, I found no fault in this man touching the things whereof ye accuse him."

Luke 23: 22, "I have found no cause of death in him."

John 18: 38, "I find no crime in him."

John 19: 4, "Ye may know that I find no crime in him."

Mark 15: 14, "Why, what evil hath he done?"

One recalls Shakespeare's words about Brutus:—

"His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him, that nature might stand up
And say to all the world, This was a Man."

"I see the crowd in Pilate's hall,
I mark their wrathful mien,
Their shouts of 'Crucify' appal,
With blasphemy between.

"And of that shouting multitude
I feel that I am one;
And in that din of voices rude,
I recognize my own."—Bonar.

22. And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not.

24. And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

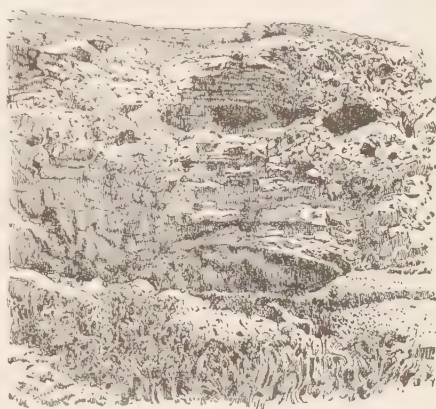
26. And the superscription of his accusation was written over, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

27. And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

III. SCENES AROUND THE CROSS OF THE KING, vs. 20-39. From Pilate's hall Jesus was led to Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, "The Place of the Skull," because from certain angles the small hill outside of the wall looked like a human skull.

FIRST. THE SAD PROCESSION, vs. 20-22. The distance from Castle Antonia to the hill which is probably the site of Calvary is about three-quarters of a mile. The procession first moved westward through the Via Dolorosa, to the road leading northward to the Damascus Gate. In advance was a soldier carrying a white wooden board on which was written the nature of the crime. Next came four soldiers, under a centurion, with the hammer and the nails, guarding Jesus, who bore, as always in such cases, the cross on which he was to suffer (John 19: 17, Am. R.). Then came two robbers, each bearing his cross and guarded by four soldiers. They were followed by a great multitude.



From a photograph by Wilson.
Place of the Skull.

There they crucified him. Jesus was nailed to the cross while it was lying upon the ground, then it was slowly raised with the sufferer upon it. The feet of the sufferer were only a foot or two above the ground, and not as represented in most pictures and in the Oberammergau Passion Play.

SECOND.

The First Word from the Cross.

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT
THEY DO. (Luke 23 : 34.)

Probably spoken in the height of the agony, when the cross with the victim upon it was dropped with a sudden wrench into its place in the ground. This expressed Christ's feeling of love toward his enemies, who were committing a crime which stands alone in all history. Thus Jesus illustrated his own teaching, — "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you and despitefully use you."

Plato in his *Phædo* describes how Socrates in the hour of death had a kindly word for his jailer, but he drank his hemlock with contempt for his Athenian judges.

THIRD. THE TITLE OVER THE CROSS, v. 26 ; Matt. 27 : 37, Luke 23 : 38 ; John 19 : 19-22. Just before the cross was raised with Jesus upon it, the white board, inscribed with the accusation for which he was crucified, was nailed to the top of the cross. The title varies slightly in wording as given in the Gospels, as was perfectly natural since it was written in three different languages.

20. And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,

30. Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him

John (in Hebrew) :	Mark (in Greek) :	Matt., Luke (in Latin) :
JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.	THE KING OF THE JEWS.	THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

The fact that the title was written in the three principal languages of the then known world is very suggestive. In *Greek*, for the foreigners and visitors, Greek being the learned language of all nations; in *Latin*, for the Romans; in *Hebrew*, for the Jews. "Thus to power (Latin), to culture (Greek), and to piety (Hebrew), was the sovereignty of Jesus declared, and it is still declared by means of such language. Power, culture and piety, in their noblest forms, pay homage at the feet of Jesus."—*Bp. J. R. Vincent*.

The Friendly Watchers, John 19: 25. Friends of Jesus, especially the women who had often ministered to his wants, were not wanting among the rough crowd around the cross. The three Marys were there, — Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary, the mother of James the less (younger), and Mary Magdalene, — and other women (Matt. 27: 55, 56), watching afar off. John, at least, of the disciples was near by (John 19: 26). Let us admire the faithfulness and love of these friends of Jesus.

The Mocking Crowds, vs. 29-32. *From nine o'clock till noon. By the soldiers, the priest, the robbers, and the crowd. They that passed by.* "The people going in and out of the city, on the thoroughfare near the place of crucifixion." — *Clarke*. *Railed on him, wagging their heads.* Using both voice and gesture to express their mockery. All the raileries described are those which express the contrast between Jesus' present condition and the title over him and his own claims. The contrast excited the mirth of the crowd. *Ah, thou that destroyest the temple*, etc. The charge which was falsely brought against Jesus in the trial, being a perversion of his words. See Luke 23: 35-37.

FOURTH. THE CONVERSION OF THE ROBBER.

The Second Word from the Cross.

VERILY I SAY UNTO THEE, TO-DAY THOU SHALT BE WITH
ME IN PARADISE. (Luke 23: 43.)

One of the malefactors crucified with Christ railed on him with the mocking crowd. The other rebuked him, acknowledging his sin and the justice of his punishment, and then with a great out-reaching faith said, *Jesus, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.* He must have known something about Jesus, his teaching, his miracles, his friendly help to publicans and sinners. And he trusted him, would be his follower, and be his friend. Then Jesus spoke that glorious word.

FIFTH. About noon.

The Third Word from the Cross.

(To his mother) WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON!
(To John) BEHOLD THY MOTHER!

John (19: 25-27) alone reports this incident, and he reports it from personal knowledge. Jesus sees His mother near the cross; she was probably a widow at this time, and might be involved in trouble or poverty from her relation to Jesus. She would need a comforter and a home. Near her stood John, the beloved disciple, more

33. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35. And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

courageous in his love than Peter in his natural boldness. To him Jesus committed His mother, in a most beautiful and graceful manner.

This story should be impressed upon every one who has a living mother.

Compare the story told by Socrates of a poor man, who, when dying, bequeathed his children to a friend.

SIXTH. THE GREAT DARKNESS, v. 33; Matt. 27:45; Luke 23:44, 45. When the sixth hour, noon time, was come there was darkness over the whole land, *i.e.* round about Jerusalem (sudden storms and darkness often cover but a small territory), which lasted three hours. The cause of the darkness could not be an eclipse, since it was the time of the full moon. "Farrar suggests as its cause a storm of hot wind from the southeast, such as sometimes comes in the last weeks of spring. 'The heavens are overcast with a deep gray, the sun loses its brightness, and at last disappears. Over the darkened land rages the storm. . . . On the saddest day in human history swept such a storm at noon over Jerusalem, adding to the terrors of the crucifixion.'" — *Exp. Gk. Test.* "The Gospel of Peter (lately discovered) states that 'many went about with lamps, supposing it was night,' and that the darkness lasted until Jesus was taken from the cross, when the earthquake took place; 'then the sun shone out, and it was found to be the ninth hour.'" — *Int. Crit. Com.*

"Three hours of raging human passion, endured with Godlike patience, were succeeded by three hours of darkness, hushing mortal hatred into silence, and perhaps contributing to the penitence of the reviler at his side. It was a supernatural gloom, since an eclipse of the sun was impossible during the full moon of the Pass-over." — *Chadwick.* This darkness was typical of the powers of darkness which seemed to be prevailing; of the great sufferings of the atonement for sin; of the darkness brooding over Jesus' heart; of the dark hour of sin and depravity that could crucify God's beloved Son; of the darkness of sin over all the earth which was to be dispelled by the cross of Jesus and by his resurrection from the dead.

"Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in."

SEVENTH. Toward the close of the darkness, as it grew denser, "darkness spread over the heart of Christ, darkness so deep and utter that for one awful moment it seemed as if the Hope of the World despaired." Then there burst forth from Jesus a cry of mingled faith and despair (v. 34):

The Fourth Word from the Cross.

ELO'I, ELO'I, LA'MA SABACH'THANI.

MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?

Jesus' cry was but a brief agony. "The bitterest cry that ever smote on human ears."

Frances Brown has written a poem where some friends were bewailing with one another their losses, — a wrecked ship, a wrecked life, a broken family, and other losses.

"But when their tales were done,
There spake among them one,
A stranger, seeming from all sorrow free.
'Sad losses have ye met,
But mine is heavier yet,
For a believing heart hath gone from me.'"

"'Alas!' these pilgrims said,
'For the living and the dead,
For Fortune's cruelty, for love's sure cross,
For the wreck of land and sea;
But however it came to thee,
Thine, stranger, is life's last and heaviest loss.'" — *Frances Brown.*

36. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

39. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

The end was at hand. Jesus knew that all things appointed him by God were completed. He had passed through all the necessary suffering, and could ask relief; and he told of his need.

EIGHTH.

The Fifth Word from the Cross.

I THIRST (John 19:28).

He was in an agony of thirst. A sponge was dipped in the common sour wine, and brought to the mouth of Jesus on a stalk of hyssop. Still all through humanity without the water of life goes up the cry, "I thirst," and we can satisfy Christ's thirst in giving them to drink. Jesus still thirsts for love, for prayer, for service, we can give him to drink.

NINTH. Immediately after the alleviation of his thirst Jesus spoke.

The Sixth Word from the Cross.

IT IS FINISHED (John 19:30).

This is one word in the Greek, and it has been called "the greatest single word ever uttered." What was finished? His life's work, the cup of suffering, the atonement for the sins of the world, the old era and dispensation.

TENTH.

The Seventh and Last Word from the Cross.

FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT.

And having said this, Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. "It was his dying cry, the triumphant note of a conqueror."

"And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many.

"Now the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake, and the things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, 'Truly this was the Son of God'" (Matt. 27:51-54).

Note how all of the evangelists speak of Christ's death as a departure, a separation of soul and body, and that a voluntary one.

The Burial. Between four and six o'clock, in a garden near Calvary. Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:31-42. Soon after His death the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, was wrapped in linen with spices, and placed in a new tomb, in a garden close by Calvary.

LESSONS FROM THE CROSS.

The Cross, as representing the whole career of Jesus, and including his resurrection, is the central event in the history of the world, the most definite and marked epoch in history. "Waterloo," says Victor Hugo, "is the change of front of the universe." It did change the face of Europe. But the Cross changed the front and movement of the world's history.

THE CROSS.

Blest they who seek,
While in their youth,
With spirit meek,
The way of truth;
To them the sacred Scriptures now display
Christ as the only true and living way.
His precious blood on Calvary was given
To make them heirs of endless bliss in heaven;
And e'en on earth the child of God can trace
The glorious blessings of his Savior's grace.

For them He bore
His Father's frown;
For them He wore
The thorny Crown;
Nailed to the Cross,
Endured its pain,
That His life's loss
Might be their gain.
Then haste to choose
That better part,
Nor dare refuse
The Lord thy heart,
Lest He declare,
"I know you not,"
And deep despair
Should be your lot.

Now look to Jesus, who on Calvary died,
And trust on Him alone who there was crucified.

The Best-shaped Poem Ever Written, within its compass, is still believed to be this one. It has never been traced to its author.

The Greatest Problem that has confronted the human race in all ages is, How to save men from sin and its consequences, and make them holy and happy.

The Most Powerful Motive Force in the Universe. Every power and every motive that can touch the heart of man to lift him out of sin into the kingdom of heaven radiates from the cross, as the completion of the sacrifice of Christ. (1) It shows to us the evil of sin, since redemption from sin demanded such a cost. (2) It reveals to us the loving heart of God. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.

The proof of one's love is obedience to God and His Son. Any one who will forsake his sins, and give himself to Jesus as his Master, Teacher, and King, thus believes in God and His Son Jesus.

The Only Way of Escape, for those who are suffering the consequences of sin, is through a forgiveness that not only removes the penalty, but implants a hatred of sin and a love of righteousness; and that becomes a greater power than law and its penalty can be, for keeping others from wrong doing. It is by redemption from sin itself, "the riddance from the criminal forever of the stain and burden and memory and inwrought evil of his crimes."

Illustration. God is Love. Mr. Spurgeon saw on a country weathercock what he thought was a strange motto, "God is Love," and asked his friend if he meant to imply that the divine love can be fickle as the wind. "No," said he, "this is what I mean — *whichever* way the wind blows, God is love; through the cold north wind, the biting east wind, still God is love, as much as when the warm, genial breezes refresh our fields and flocks." God loves men so that He uses every possible means for their salvation. The greatest is His love in Jesus Christ. He sends joys and sorrows, both to bring us to our Saviour.

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

"Just as I am, thy Love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, and thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

LESSON XII (XXV). — June 23.

JESUS TRIUMPHANT OVER DEATH. — Mark 16: 1-20.

PRINT Mark 16: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Now hath Christ been raised from the dead. — 1 COR. 15: 20.

Additional Material for Teachers. (Parallels) : Matt. 28 : 1-20 ; Luke 23 : 56b-24 : 12 ; John 20 : 1-25. Also 1 Cor. 15 : 1-58 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 13-18 ; Rev. 1 : 1-18.

Primary Topic : Jesus' Power over Death.

Memory Verse : He is risen, even as he said. Matt. 28 : 6.

Lesson Material : Mark 15 : 42-16 : 20.

Intermediate Topic : The Living Christ.

Senior and Adult Topic : Christ's Resurrection and the Christian's Assurance of Immortality.

Additional Material : See same for Teachers.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The teacher will naturally lay the emphasis of his teaching on the fact that Jesus is alive, and the proofs of immortality, the culmination of his whole life, without which we would be left in darkness. The resurrection of Jesus is the crown, the glory, the hope, the assurance, of life beyond the grave.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Resurrection of Jesus was very early Sunday morning, April 9, A.D. 30. The third day after his death on the cross (Matt. 28 : 2-4).

The Ascension was 40 days later, May 18, from Mt. Olivet.

His Appearances. — He showed himself alive to many in the eleven different times he appeared.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The burial. Why in a new tomb?

The three days in the tomb; how reckoned?

The women: "last at his cross, and earliest at his grave" (Mrs. Browning).

Why were Mary Magdalene and Peter specially named?

With what body did Jesus rise; and have during the forty days?

How many appearances did Jesus make?

Is the proof sufficient for certainty?

Relation of Jesus' resurrection to our immortality.

Christ our everliving Saviour and King.

The missionary work of the disciples.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

F. B. Meyer's *From Calvary to Pentecost*. Chapter VII of Dr. Jowett's *School of Calvary*, "The Morning Glory." Prof. James Orr's *The Resurrection of Jesus*. Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*, "Biology." Whately's *Future State*. Discussions of Immortality from various standpoints: Plato's *Phædo*, Cicero's *De Senectute*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Our *Risen King's Forty Days*, by Geo. Dana Boardman, D.D. C. R. Morison's *Proofs of the Resurrection from a Lawyer's Standpoint*. Dr. Kennedy's *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ, an Historical Fact*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Rev. Dr. George A. Gordon's *The Vision of the Dead*. Henry van Dyke's *The Mansion* (Harpers). Dr. Lyman Abbott's *The Upper Room*. *The Gospel of the Hereafter*, by J. P. Smith (Revell). *The Re-appearing*, by Charles Morice, is a story located in Paris, imaging the effect of the bodily, visible coming of Christ to-day. Washington Gladden's *The Practice of Immortality*. Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*. "Have you seen her, the New City?" by Marguerite Wilkinson.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Resurrection of Jesus, and its Meaning for Us.

THE STORY OF THE FIRST EASTER MORNING.

The Three Days in the Tomb.
Jesus Rises from the Dead.

OUR LORD'S APPEARANCE AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

THE GLORY OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

I. The Convincing Proof of Jesus' Resurrection.

II. The Assurance of Our Immortality.

III. Jesus' Missionary Message.

IV. The Ascension.

V. The Promised Return.

THE LESSON IN ART.

The pictures illustrative of this lesson are too many for even a hint to be put in here. Better write to the W. A. Wilde Co. and other publishers for their catalogues.

The Resurrection, Ploekhöst, Schönherr, Naack.*

Easter Morning, Di Credi,* Hofmann,* Overbeck.

On the Way to Emmaus, Hofmann,* Ploekhöst.*

Supper at Emmaus, Rembrandt,* Titian, Müller.

Ascension, Bierman, Doré, Hofmann,* Rembrandt.*

THE BURIAL. *Friday afternoon, April 7, between four and six o'clock, near Calvary* (Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:31-42). Jesus died about three o'clock Friday afternoon, as we learned in our last lesson. Joseph of Arimathea asked the permission of Pilate to care for the body of Jesus. He with Nicodemus took the body from the cross, wrapped it in linen cloths, with an hundred-weight of spices to preserve the body from decomposition, and laid it in a new sepulchre belonging to Joseph, in a garden near by, and rolled a stone against the door.

MEASURES TAKEN TO MAKE SURE THAT JESUS WAS REALLY DEAD. *Friday evening and Saturday morning, April 8.*

It was of the utmost importance, though they knew it not at the time, that the fact of Christ's death should be proved beyond the possibility of cavil or doubt, for otherwise distrust would be thrown upon the fact of his resurrection. Every precaution was taken, not by his disciples, but by the enemies of Jesus.

(1) The Roman centurion assured Pilate of the death of Jesus (Mark 15:44, 45).

(2) The soldiers pierced his body with a spear, and from the wound flowed blood and water, — a proof of death (John 19:34, 35).

(3) At the request of the chief priests, the stone against the door of the sepulchre was sealed, and (4) a Roman guard was placed around the tomb, so that no one could take away the body, and then pretend that he had risen (Matt. 27:62-66).

(5) The tomb was a new one, in which no one had ever been buried, and so there could be no doubt of the identity of the body of Christ.

THE STORY OF THE FIRST EASTER MORNING. **FIRST. THE THREE DAYS IN THE TOMB.** Jesus plainly told his disciples that he would rise again "after three days," "in three days," or "on the third day." He uses sometimes one expression and sometimes the other, showing that the terms are interchangeable, according to the Jewish custom. Jesus was buried between four and six o'clock (probably nearer four) on Friday afternoon, April 7, and rose early on Sunday morning, April 9, so that he was in the tomb parts of three consecutive days.

BY JEWISH RECKONING.

4-6 P.M., Friday = 2 hours.

6 P.M., Friday to 6 P.M., Saturday = 24 hours.

6 P.M., Saturday to 4 or 5 A.M., Sunday = 10 or 11 hours.

BY COMMON RECKONING.

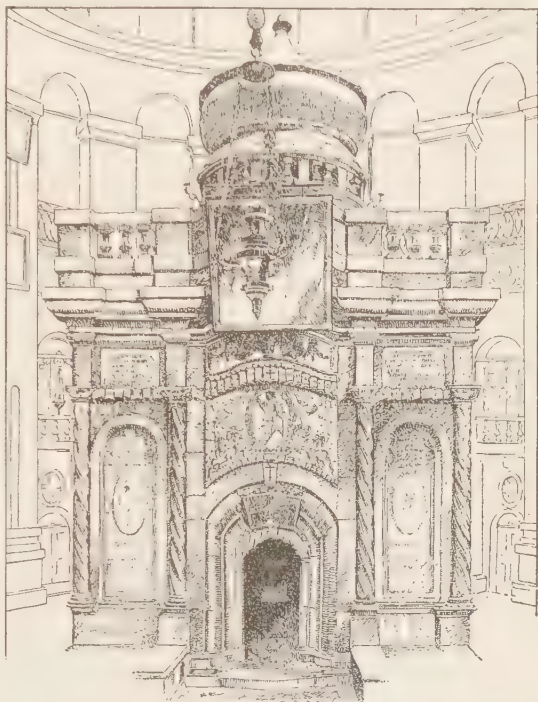
4 P.M. to 12 midnight, Friday = 8 hours.

To 12 midnight Saturday = 24 hours.

12 midnight to 4 or 5 A.M., Sunday = 4 or 5 hours.

Each part of a day was reckoned by the Jews as one day, just as in computing the reigns of the Jewish kings each part of a year is reckoned as a year. Thus, a reign extending from December, 1016, through January, 1018, would be counted as three years, although only thirteen or fourteen months. It is so in the Old Testament, in the Talmud, in Josephus, and in the Assyrian tablets. Days were counted in the same way as years.

SECOND. JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD *very early Sunday morning, April 9.* It was our Sunday, but the day after the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday. The change



Interior of Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem.

Reputed Tomb of Christ.

from a Saturday Sabbath to the Sunday Sabbath was because Jesus rose from the dead on our Sunday.

The story as told by Matthew (28 : 2-4) is that there was a great earthquake : for an angel of God descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone from the tomb, and sat upon it waiting for the women to come with their sweet spices.

With What Body did He Rise ? It is of the utmost importance that we remember that the body that Jesus rose with was the very same body which died on the cross. There is no possible way to prove that Jesus rose from the dead, if the body was not the same after that it was before he was buried. (1) To rise with a body changed, as Paul says our resurrection bodies are changed from our natural bodies, would be to vitiate the proof of his resurrection on which our faith and hope depend. (2) Jesus takes special pains to show his disciples that he is the same. He declares that he is flesh and bones ; he bids Thomas put his hands in the prints of the nails and in the wound made by the spear ; he eats before them the same kind of food he ate before he died. While Paul tells us that the resurrection body is a spiritual, not a natural body, and made after Christ's glorious body, of Jesus' resurrection body we have hints in the transfiguration, and in the description of his appearance in Rev. 1 : 13-16. (3) The fact that Jesus seemed to have peculiar power over his body, entered rooms apparently with closed doors, and appeared occasionally and for brief seasons only, is no proof that his body was changed ; for Jesus gave hints of such power before his crucifixion, in escaping crowds and walking on the sea. (4) Jesus' body was doubtless changed at the ascension into a spiritual body.

OUR LORD'S APPEARANCES AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

ORDER	TIME	TO WHOM	WHERE	RECORD
1	Sunday, April 9, early in the morning	To Mary Magdalene	Near the sepulchre at Jerusalem	Mark 16: 9; John 20: 11-18
2	Sunday morning	To the women returning from the sepulchre	Near Jerusalem	Matt. 28: 9, 10
3	Sunday	To Simon Peter alone	Near Jerusalem	Luke 24: 34
4	Sunday afternoon	To two disciples going to Emmaus	Between Jerusalem and Emmaus, and at Emmaus	Luke 24: 13-31; Mark 16: 12, 13
5	Sunday evening	To the apostles, except Thomas	Jerusalem	John 20: 19-25; Mark 16: 14
6	Sunday evening, April 16	To the apostles, Thomas being present	Jerusalem	John 20: 26-29
7	Last of April or first of May	To seven disciples, fishing	Sea of Galilee	John 21: 1-13
8	Last of April or first of May	To the eleven disciples on a mountain	Galilee	Matt. 28: 16-20; Mark 16: 15-18
9	Last of April or first of May	To above five hundred brethren at once	Galilee	1 Cor. 15: 6
10	May	To James only	Jerusalem, probably	1 Cor. 15: 7
11	Thursday, May 18	To all the apostles at his ascension	Mount of Olives, near Bethany	Mark 16: 19-20; Luke 24: 50, 51; Acts 1: 6-12
12	Jesus appeared to Paul about six years later, near Damascus, A.D. 36. Acts 9: 3, 4; 1 Cor. 15: 8.			

The First Appearance of Jesus was to Mary Magdalene. Several women who had watched Jesus by the cross, such as Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, Salome, the mother of James and John, Mary the mother of James the younger, and other women, who had been "last at his cross," and were

AND when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

now "earliest at his grave," came at early dawn to Jesus' garden tomb bearing spices.

"With myrrh and with aloes,
We balmed and we bathed him,
Loyally, lovingly,
Tenderly swathed him:

"With cerecloth and band
For the grave we arrayed him;
But oh, he is gone
From the place where we laid him."

— Goethe.

They probably came from their various homes to meet at the tomb. It seems that Mary Magdalene first reached the tomb, and seeing the stone rolled from the door, hastened to tell the news to Peter. The others then came, and entering into the tomb, "found not the body of the Lord Jesus" (Luke).

Before they reached the tomb Mary Magdalene had gone to tell Peter the news. At the tomb the women found the stone rolled away, but two shining angels were there to explain the circumstances.

They then went back to the city to report to the apostles, *and Peter*.

In the meantime Mary of Magdala had returned to the tomb. But she wept because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. Then she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing. How she first mistook Jesus for the gardener, and how Jesus revealed himself to her by the way he said *Mary*, is told by John (20: 14-18).

Note. It is especially interesting and suggestive that Mary Magdalene who had been redeemed by Jesus from the terrible affliction allied to insanity, having been possessed by seven demons whom Jesus had cast out, and whose debt of gratitude was unspeakable (Luke 8: 2); and Peter, who had thrice denied his Lord, and wept bitterly over his fall, should be the first two persons mentioned in connection with the resurrection of Jesus. These two needed Jesus' forgiveness and love more than any of the other friends of Jesus.

The Second Appearance, still early on Sunday morning, was to the women mentioned above, returning from the tomb to announce to the disciples that Jesus had risen. They found not the body of the Lord Jesus (Luke).

And as they went to tell his disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, All hail. They held him by the feet. Clapsed his feet, in reverent, affectionate joy, to make sure that it was indeed their Lord, and to express their gladness. And worshipped him, by falling on the knees and touching the ground with the forehead after the Oriental fashion as expression of profound reverence. Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee. The same message which the angels had given them in the sepulchre (Matt. 28: 9, 10).

The Third Appearance was to Peter alone on Sunday near Jerusalem. Peter had another interview of the greatest importance, to be referred to later.

The Fourth Appearance was on the same Sunday afternoon to two of his disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-31) about seven miles n.w. of Jerusalem. It is not known exactly where this village was situated. On the way they were communing together on "the all-absorbing question of the hour." While they were thus reasoning together Jesus joined them. Their eyes were holden that they should not know him, so that they did not recognize him, probably for some of the same reasons that kept Mary from recognizing him.

One time I was visiting my somewhat aged father, and just at twilight I came up with him walking with another gentleman, and I joined in the conversation. Just as their paths parted, my father whispered to him, "Who is that gentleman who has been walking with us?" He did not recognize his own son, not expecting him, nor taking particular notice. I immediately thought of Mary and the two disciples going to Emmaus.

This gave Jesus the opportunity he desired. "And beginning from Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning

4. And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

himself," and through them to the other disciples. When they reached their abode at Emmaus Jesus "made as though he would go further. And they constrained him, saying, 'Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent,'" words which are the theme of one of the most beautiful hymns in the English language.

He came in and at the table "he took bread and blessed"; and breaking it he gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him, perhaps by some familiar action, and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, "Was not our heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

There is here a good place to discuss the experiences of teacher and class in having the Scriptures opened to us.

The Fifth Appearance. Sunday evening, in the upper room in Jerusalem, ten disciples being present. Thomas for some good reason, doubtless, being absent; or because in his sorrow he could not believe that Jesus was alive. **And others with them.** Probably the same as the 120 or a part of them, mentioned in Acts 1: 13, 14; including Mary the mother of Jesus and other women.

The doors were shut for fear of the Jews, as a protection against surprise, and against spies. While the two from Emmaus were telling their story (Luke 24: 35, 36) suddenly Jesus stood in their midst and said unto them, **Peace be unto you.** Peace in themselves during these troublous times, Peace with one another, Peace with God, Peace in the midst of enemies.

Illustration. Christians are like the different voices in a choir, and instruments in an orchestra, made to be in harmony, although differing so much in tone, in quality, in pitch.

Illustrations. The hymn, "Peace, perfect peace," and Mrs. Stowe's "When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean." Longfellow's "Arsenal at Springfield" and "Christmas Bells."

Jesus shewed unto them his hands and his side. This was done first to convince them that it was Jesus himself risen from the dead. That it was not a vision, or a ghost they saw, but the very same Jesus who had been their teacher, and had been crucified and buried. To convince them still more he called for food and ate it as of old (Luke 24: 41-43).

He again said **Peace be unto you, and Receive ye the Holy Ghost, and As the Father hath sent me, so send I you.**

Sixth Appearance. The next Sunday evening, April 16, Thomas present with the others. The words imply that the gathering was held in the same place and under the same circumstances as before. The other disciples had told Thomas that they had seen the Lord, but he had refused to believe their testimony. They might be mistaken. Nothing less than the facts would convince him, — "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

The doors were shut as before. Suddenly Jesus is present in the midst and "saith to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, **My Lord and my God.**"

This again impressed upon the disciples the truth of Christ's being alive.

Seventh Appearance. The last of April or early in May, to seven of his disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where they had been fishing. Recorded in John.

Jesus was on the shore with a fire of coals, with fish laid thereon. When during the whole night the disciples had caught nothing, Jesus, not yet recognized, showed

8. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man*; for they were afraid.

9. Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

them how to catch a multitude of fishes, a type of the multitude of converts they should bring to Jesus and his religion. See Acts 2.

But first Peter must receive the assurance that his threefold denial of Jesus was forgiven; and he was restored to the apostleship, through the three questions, — **Lovest thou me?** See the story told in Lesson X (XXIII), June 9.

Eighth Appearance. Last of April or early in May to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28: 16-20). The message to them was: "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." The word for "power" in the Greek includes "authority." These were essential to the success of the mission of the disciples and all Christians, as recorded in Matt. 28: 19, 20.

Ninth Appearance. On the last of April or first of May to above 500 at once, in Galilee, recorded by Paul in 1 Cor. 15: 6, "of whom the greater part remain unto this present," that is, at the time he wrote First Corinthians, about A.D. 56, twenty-six years after the resurrection of Jesus.

Tenth Appearance. In May to the apostle James only, probably at Jerusalem, 1 Cor. 15: 7.

Eleventh Appearance. To all the apostles at the time of Jesus' ascension from the Mount of Olives near Bethany, on May 18, 40 days after his resurrection.

Twelfth Appearance was to Paul near Damascus when the persecutor became a convert to Jesus, and His most influential apostle.

THE GLORY OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

I. THE CONVINCING PROOF THAT JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD, AND IS OUR EVERLASTING REDEEMER AND KING. "I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidences of those who have written about them; and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the mind of a fair inquirer, than that Christ died, and rose again from the dead." — *Dr. Arnold*. So *Dr. Lyman Abbott*: "The Resurrection of Jesus is the best attested fact in history."

The transforming of the disciples, — originally but common men, — into Apostles who changed the face of the world, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, is a proof.

The very existence of the Christian church is a proof of the resurrection of Jesus. "Faith in mere visions or phantoms may produce phantoms, but not such a phenomenon as the Christian Church, the greatest fact and the mightiest institution in the history of the world." — *Pres. Woolsey*.

Christ died, is risen again, and is on the right hand of God (Rom. 8: 34; Col. 3: 1), seated with the Father in his throne (Rev. 3: 21; 22: 1). We have a picture of his glory in Heb. 1: 2-4 and in Rev. 1: 10-18. We do not, as has been falsely charged, worship a dead Christ, but a living Christ. Having shown his power to conquer death, the great enemy, we know he has power to conquer all our enemies. He is the great, living Leader, Inspirer, Protector, Guide, Saviour, and Life of his people, who will make his kingdom to triumph over all evil. As *Canon Liddon* says: — "The resurrection of Christ is the certificate of our Lord's mission from heaven, to which he himself pointed as a warrant of his claims."

II. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION IS THE ASSURANCE OF IMMORTALITY for all who receive and obey him. The resurrection of Christ is the assurance that death does not end all; that there is an existence beyond death. The soul does not die with the body, for Jesus' soul did not die with his body. As Jesus said himself, his death was like a grain of wheat cast into the ground, from which grows the stalk and the fruit.

"So is also the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption : it is sown in dishonor ; it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power : it is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15 : 42-44).

"We put into the ground a bulb, and it rises a golden lily. We drop into the mold a seed, and it comes forth an exquisite flower, resplendent with brilliant colors ; these are the same that we put into the earth, the same identically, but, oh, how different !" — *Spurgeon*.

Our future bodies may be no more like our present ones than a rose is like a black seed or a lily like a bulb. How, then, is it the same ? Just as the plant grows out of the seed, the same kind of a plant always from the same kind of seed. How shall we recognize each other ? Just as a florist seeing a seed can picture the plant and the flower that will grow from it ; or, seeing a plant, can immediately recognize the seed from which it grew. For the soul lives on without this mortal body, but receives a body in the other world, like Christ's glorious body.

Illustration. Plato (*Phædo*) and the Greek philosophers debated over the famous question whether the relation of the soul to the body is that of *Harmony to a Harp*, the music ceasing forever when the harp is broken, or of a *Rower to a Boat*, the rower surviving though the boat be destroyed.

Professor Thomson of New York, in his *Brain and Personality*, proves by various exact experiments that the brain is the instrument of the soul, as distinct from it as the musician is distinct from the organ he plays. The death of the organ is not the death of the musician. In his next place of living he may have a better organ. Death is but the separation of the soul from the body.

Hence we may know the loved ones that have gone before.

Heaven is placed before us as an ideal, that here we may learn the music of the angels, and the deeds of Jesus.

Dr. Payson's Dying Experience. Compare Paul's experience when about to finish his course (2 Tim. 4 : 6-8) with Dr. Payson's later hours. "To adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as He approached, and now He fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun ; exulting yet almost trembling while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering, with unutterable wonder, why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants. I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion."

III. JESUS' MISSIONARY MESSAGE TO ALL HIS DISCIPLES, Matt. 28 : 16-20. All Power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (The Power sent on the day of Pentecost.) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

IV. THE ASCENSION, Acts 1 : 9 ; Luke 24 : 51. While they beheld. That they might have clear proof of his ascension, to assure them that there was no deception. He was in the act of blessing them when he was taken up (Luke 24 : 51). A cloud received him out of their sight (compare Matt. 17 : 5 ; Luke 9 : 34). It was at this time, doubtless, that the great change came over his body, described in 1 Cor. 15 : 52-53. For such a change is signified by his appearance as John saw him (Rev. 1 : 12-16).

The Ascension was the only fitting close of the life of Jesus.

Our last view of Christ is not upon the cross, but ascending from Olivet into glory.

We have not a dead, but a living Saviour, to whom we shall go, and like whom we shall be in glory.

V. THE PROMISED RETURN, Acts 1 : 7, 8, 11. The disciples asked Jesus, saying, Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ?

Jesus : It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in his own power.

But ye shall receive Power through the Holy Spirit, by whom ye shall be witnesses to Jesus unto the uttermost part of the earth.

At some time, we know not when, the "Lord's Prayer" shall be fulfilled, and God's kingdom shall come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The signs of the coming are greater, more wonderful during the present century than ever before.

"*The Second Coming as a Vast Spiritual Progress.* May we not think of the descent of the Lord from heaven as a glorious process rather than as a single, dramatic event! May we not picture the fuller manifestation of the divine element in human affairs as a continuous movement of the Spirit rather than the sudden appearance of some radiant figure in the clouds? When the kingdoms of this world, business and politics, school affairs and church affairs, home life and social life, are all in line to become kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, we are facing a very real coming of the Lord.

"Is not this the fulfillment of the 'eternal purpose' which God purposed in Christ?" — *Prof. Charles R. Brown, of Yale.*

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

"Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of mighty sails,
Pilots of purple twilight, dropping down their costly bales;

"Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nation's airy navies grappling in the central blue;

"Far along the world-wide whisper of the south wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

"Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world."

— *Tennyson, Locksley Hall.*

"Have we seen her, the New City, O my brothers, where she stands
The superb, supreme creation of unnumbered human hands;
The complete and sweet expression of unnumbered human souls
Bound by love to work together while their love their work controls?
Have you seen her, The New City, in her glory? Ah, not yet
Gilds the sun with actual splendor, chimney top and minaret,
But her site is surely purchased, and her pattern is designed,
And her blessed ways are visions for all striving humankind.
The New City, O my brothers, we ourselves shall never see —
She will gladden children's children into holy ecstasy —
Let our lives be in the building! We shall lay us in the sod,
Happier, if our human travail build their avenues to God!"

— *Marguerite O. B. Wilkinson in The Independent, June 13, 1912.*

"I may not stay to see the day
When the great Saviour shall bear sway
And earth shall glisten in the ray
That cometh from above;
But come it fast, or come it slow,
'Twill come at last, I surely know,
And heaven and earth shall feel the glow,
And men shall call it Love."

LESSON XIII (XXVI). — June 30.

REVIEW. JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER AND LORD.

GOLDEN TEXTS. —

1. *For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life.* — JOHN 3 : 16.

2. *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* — MATT. 16 : 16.

3. *I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.* — ROM. 1 : 16.

The Review covers the whole life of Christ, included in the past six months' study in the Gospel of Mark, and the parallels in the other Gospels.

FIRST. THERE SHOULD BE A MAP-STUDY OF PALESTINE, and of the places connected with the life of Christ. It will help greatly if the principal places are so

thoroughly impressed upon the memory that one can see them in their situation with the mind's eye without continually turning to the maps in the introduction of this volume.

SECOND. REVIEW THE LIFE OF CHRIST BY MEANS OF PICTURES, of which there are many.

The Stereopticon is especially good, and pictures of the life of Christ can be obtained wherever the instrument is sold.

The Reflectoroscope can be used with the penny pictures and pictures of every kind. It must, like the stereopticon, be used in a darkened room, or in the evening.

The Stereoscope is especially excellent in making clear and natural the scenes from Palestine. The instrument and the pictures can be obtained from Underwood and Underwood, Fifth Ave. and 19th St., New York.

Wilde's Bible Pictures. The firm have a large number of penny pictures. 120 Boylston St., Boston, Mass.

THIRD FORM OF REVIEW, by questions covering the chief events in the Life of Christ, to be answered by the scholars. It is wise to have the whole list printed; enough copies for every member of the school, with spaces for the answers.

These may be given to the school on Review Day.

But it is better to give them out two weeks beforehand, with directions to find the answers, and bring them to the Review. The superintendent reads the questions and each scholar gives the answers he has found, and notes down on his paper the answers to the others. The whole school will then have a fresh vision of the Life of Christ.

QUESTIONS ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

1. In what town was Jesus born?
2. What was his mother's name?
3. How long ago was he born?
4. To what race did he belong?
5. What was his native country?
6. Describe how you would reach it from your home.
7. Of what Empire was it a province?
8. To what government is it now subject?
9. What two remarkable welcomes to his coming? (Luke 2:8-14; Matt. 2:1-12.)
10. Where did he spend his childhood and youth?
11. What trade did he learn?
12. Tell the story of his first visit to Jerusalem. (Luke 2:41-51.)
13. How old was he when he began to preach? (Luke 3:23.)
14. Who prepared the way for his work?
15. Why was Jesus baptized?
16. Over what three temptations did he gain the victory?
17. What were the themes of his preaching? (Matt. 4:17, 23.)
18. By what kind of deeds did he prove that his mission was from God?
19. Name some of the miracles he wrought.
20. What was the first one? (John 2:1-11.)
21. What great sermon did he preach?
22. How many apostles did he choose?
23. How many of them can you name? (Matt. 10:1-5.)
24. Name the three great divisions of Palestine west of the Jordan.

25. In which of these three did he spend the most time ?
26. How many years long was his ministry ?
27. Name the different *kinds* of miracles he wrought.
28. Were they all for the good of the people ?
29. In what way did Jesus show his real glory ? (Matt. 17 : 1-8.)
30. Name as many of his parables as you can.
31. Why did he speak in parables ?
32. What did Jesus do especially for children ? (Matt. 18 : 1-6 ; 19 : 13-15.)
33. Tell the story of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10 : 25-37.)
34. What did Jesus teach about riches ? (Luke 12 : 13-34.)
35. What was his teaching about the Sabbath ? (Matt. 12 : 1-8 ; Luke 6 : 6-10 ; 13 : 14-16.)
36. What did he teach about becoming his disciples ? (Mark 8 : 34 ; John 3 : 10 ; 8 : 31, 32.)
37. Tell the story of the Lost Sheep. (Luke 15 : 1-7.)
38. Tell the story of the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. (Mark 11 : 1-11.)
39. What did Jesus teach about the Commandments ? (Mark 12 : 28-34.)
40. Tell about Jesus and the Bethany home. (Mark 14 : 3-9 ; Luke 10 : 38-42 ; John 12 : 1-8.)
41. The story of the Last Supper. (Mark 14 : 12-26.)
42. The story of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Mark 14 : 32-42 ; Luke 22 : 39-46.)
43. The story of the betrayal of Jesus. (Matt. 26 : 47-50 ; Mark 14 : 43-52.)
44. Of what did the Jews accuse Jesus ? (Mark 14 : 63, 64.)
45. Of what was he accused in the trial before Pilate ? (Luke 23 : 1-3.)
46. What did Pilate say about him ? (Luke 23 : 13-16.)
47. Where was Jesus crucified ?
48. Why was he crucified ?
49. Where was he buried ?
50. When did he rise from the dead ?
51. How many times did he appear to his disciples ?
52. Name some of these.
53. What great commission did he give to his disciples ?
54. From what place did he ascend to heaven ?
55. Where is he now ? (Col. 3 : 1 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 22 ; Rev. 3 : 21.)
56. Is He your Saviour, Helper, and Leader ?



THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

JULY 7 — SEPTEMBER 29, 1918.

NOTE. — The lessons of this quarter are a new departure in uniform Sunday-school lessons. Heretofore the lessons have followed the chronological order of the Bible. Now we are to have occasional topical courses, of which this is the first. These courses will aim to make the pupils acquainted with all the chief passages on the subjects considered. While each lesson is based upon one or two leading passages, the classes are expected to get light on the subject from all parts of the Bible, thus growing familiar with the Book of books, and discovering the unity of Scripture.

LESSON I. — July 7.

BEGINNING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. — John 1:35-51;
Acts 16:13-34.

PRINT Acts 16:13-15, 25-34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He that will, let him take the water of life freely.* — **REV.** 22:17.

Devotional Reading : John 15:4-16.

Additional Material for Teachers : Acts 2:37-47; 8:26-40; Rom. 5:1-11.

Primary Topic : Loving and Trusting Jesus.

Lesson Material : John 1:35-51.

Memory Verse : We love, because he first loved us. — 1 John 4:19.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic : The Christian Life and How to Begin It.

Additional Material : Matt. 25:31-46; John 15:4-16.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

In the younger classes, using the lesson in John, the teacher's aim will be to inculcate love of Christ and obedience to him by showing how young men flocked around him when he was on earth, and followed wherever he went. In the intermediate and older classes the teacher will discuss the essentials of the Christian life, and the steps to be taken in order to begin it. Brush away the non-essentials. Make it seem as simple and compelling as it really is.

LEARN BY HEART.

Rev. 22:17; John 15:8; Rom. 5:1.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

What Christians are called upon to believe.
What Christians are called upon to do.
The meaning of Christian baptism.
How Christ's disciples became Christians.
How Paul's converts became Christians.
Christ's terms of admission to his church.
The difference between Christians and non-Christians.



THE SOUL'S AWAKENING.

J. J. Sant.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

The Calling of the Disciples took place at Bethabara near the Jordan, February, A.D. 27, very early in Christ's ministry.

The Conversion of Lydia and the Jailer took place at Philippi in Macedonia, A.D. 50 or 51, in the course of Paul's second missionary journey.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Greenhough's *The Apostles of Our Lord*. Dixon in *Addresses on St. John*. Jones's *The Glorious Company of the Apostles*. *Lives of Paul* by Stalker, Taylor, Baring-Gould, Abbott, etc. *Works on the Acts* by Rackham, Furneaux, etc. On Lydia, works on *The Women of the New Testament* by Horton, Margaret F. Sangster, Mrs. Charles, etc. Selbie's *Aspects of Christ*. Speer's *John's Gospel*.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How to Begin the Christian Life.

I. HOW SIX DISCIPLES BEGAN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, John 1:35-51.

The summons to Christ.
Dwelling with Christ.
Calling others to Christ.

II. HOW LYDIA AND THE JAILER BEGAN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, Acts 16:13-34.

"Whose heart the Lord opened"
Lydia wins her household.
The jailer's wise question.

III. WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN LIFE?

The Ethiopian treasurer finds out, Acts 8:26-40.
Christ states it, John 15:4-16.
Paul states it, Rom. 5:1-11.
The early Christians practise it, Acts 2:37-47.
As Christ will test it, Matt. 25:31-46.
Will you not begin it now?

I. HOW SIX DISCIPLES BEGAN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, John 1:35-51.

In our Studies in the Christian Life it is well to have at the outset a lesson on how to begin this great life. First we will see how Christ's disciples began it under his guidance; then, how the first European Christians began it under the guidance of the great apostle, Paul; and finally we shall discover from some notable passages of Scripture what the Christian life is.

THE CALL TO JESUS. It was given by John the Baptist, the unselfish herald of Christ, who pointed him out with the great words, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" He knew that his own disciples would leave him for Jesus, and two of them did so at once, Andrew and John (the writer of the fourth Gospel).

John the Baptist was a true friend. He wanted these young men to get the best, and so he turned them to Jesus. You have many friends and acquaintances; whom are you trying to lead to Jesus?

Illustration. Henry Clay Trumbull, the famous preacher, editor, and author, was converted by a letter written him by a friend. Mr. Trumbull then sought to win to Christ a close friend in his office, only to discover, to his amazement, that the friend had been a Christian all along, but a silent, negative Christian. That office mate of Dr. Trumbull's missed a chance at a life-long joy in the great life thus consecrated to the Lord.

DWELLING WITH JESUS. Andrew and John spent the night at the house where Jesus was, and John especially must have been wonderfully attracted at once to Jesus, for the two were so much alike. "The Lord has still his abiding place, to which he calls us, saying, 'Come and see!' My dwelling place may be ever so humble, but he will gladly abide with me. Dare I be indifferent to his gracious invitation to dwell with him in the secret places of the Most High?" — *Rev. William Hiram Foulkes, D.D.* It is living with Christ, in Bible reading and prayer and loving obedience, that makes a Christian.

BROTHERS WIN BROTHERS. "No sooner had Andrew made his great discovery than he burned to impart the secret to others; and what better place could he find for that purpose than his own home?" — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.* So while John was going after his brother James, Andrew went after his brother Simon, and Andrew succeeded first, thus gaining the exalted honor of being the first Christian soul-winner. "Andrew was not a great preacher, so far as we know, but on the day of Pentecost, while Peter preached with a tongue of fire and three thousand were converted, he had a right to feel that Peter's great sermon was the echo of the personal word which brought him to Jesus." — *Rev. A. C. Dixon, D.D.*

SIMON'S NEW NAME. Becoming a Christian means a change — an immediate change in life aims, and a gradual but sure change in character. All this is indicated in the new name which Christ gave to Simon, namely, Cephas (Aramaic) or Peter

13. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

(Greek), meaning rock or stone. Simon was as unstable as a wave, now bold and now cowardly, now wise and now foolish; under the teaching of Christ he became as firm as the rock. Such a change will be made in any one who yields to Christ's leading and control.

CHRIST'S CALL TO HIMSELF. Andrew and John were called by John the Baptist. Simon and James were called by their brothers. But Philip was called by Jesus himself. Jesus was seeking Philip, as he is always seeking to draw men to himself, and as he wants his followers to be doing always. When he found Philip he merely said, "Follow me." He is saying that to every one who is not a Christian. Sometimes he speaks through an earnest sermon, sometimes through a Christian book or paper, sometimes through a hymn, or the voice of a friend, or a letter. Sometimes he speaks through the conscience, with no audible or written word.

Illustration. There was a revival in a New England town, and a certain wicked coachman had not gone near the meetings; but one day, while he was feeding the horses, a deep sense of his sinfulness came over him. Kneeling in the hay, he at once and forever gave his life to Jesus Christ.

MAKING JESUS KING. Philip went right to work as soon as he became a Christian. "Philip was the very type of plain downright common sense, the mind to whom the multiplication-table will ever be the model for a creed. It was he who calculated how many pennyworths of bread it would take to feed the multitude." — *Ian Mac-laren*. When he told his friend Nathanael that he had found the Messiah, and that he was Jesus of Nazareth, that noble, earnest, prejudiced man asked at once, "Can any good thing come out of that despised village, Nazareth?" "Tens of thousands of people are being kept away from Christ by prejudice — by what they see of Christian people, by the dogmas under which theologians have buried Christ, by what skeptics have written about him. A caricature Christ prevents them from coming to the real Christ." — *Rev. J. D. Jones*. Philip's answer to Nathanael was a model one, "Come and see." He did not argue; he would let Jesus be the argument. That is what we should do when we want our friends to become Christians, — get them to go to church, to the Bible, and to prayer, and so learn about Jesus for themselves. This worked in the case of Nathanael, for when Jesus had talked to him a little, and especially had told him just where he was found by Philip, Nathanael became his follower with the splendid confession, "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

Illustrations. Every true Christian has Nathanael's feeling that Jesus is King of his life, with a right to all the life contains. That great monarch, Queen Victoria, expressed on her death-bed a wish that Jesus might come in glory before she died. "And why, your Majesty?" her chaplain asked. "Because I can think of nothing that would give me more pleasure than the privilege of giving to him with my own hand the crown of Great Britain and India."

Every one, however young and ignorant, can say "Come and see," and so bring souls to Christ. "An illiterate cook in a country village won to Christ some of the best people in it, because she had a story of personal salvation to tell, and the people for whom she worked testified that her character confirmed the truth of her story. When Robert McAll began his work in Paris, he knew just two sentences in French, 'God loves you' and 'I love you.' He spoke these short sentences to the people as he met them on the street, and began in this way his most successful life work." — *Rev. A. C. Dixon, D.D.*

II. HOW LYDIA AND THE JAILER BEGAN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, Acts 16:13-34. Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke had been led, by Paul's vision of the man of Macedonia, to cross from Asia to Europe, and found themselves in the city of Philippi, important in history for its gold mines and because in the battle near by, B.C. 42, the Roman republic came to an end.

13. On the sabbath Paul and his companions, failing to find a Jewish synagogue in which to begin their work, went out of the city to the bank of the Angites, and there found a little company of women met for prayer in a simple enclosure. True soul-winners will go anywhere to seek the needy.

14. Lydia . . . heard us. She was a Greek proselyte from Thyatira, a city of

14. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained *us*.

25. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

the province of Lydia in Asia Minor (see Rev. 2: 18-20). She was a **seller of purple**, "that is, of woolen fabrics dyed purple, for the manufacture of which her native town was famous. Whether she was the agent in Philippi of some firm in Thyatira or whether she was carrying on her trade independently, we cannot say; her name suggests the possibility that she was a freedwoman, while from the fact that we hear of her household and her house, though no mention is made of her husband, it has been conjectured that she was a widow of some property." — *Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. **Whose heart the Lord opened**, "as a flower to the sun." — *F. B. Meyer*. The first European convert was a woman. "If man owes much to Christ, woman owes still more. He has delivered her from the degradation of being man's slave and plaything and raised her to be his friend and his equal before heaven; while, on the other hand, a new glory has been added to Christ's religion by the fineness and dignity with which it is invested when embodied in the female character." — *James Stalker*.

15. When she was baptized, and her household. True converts seek to convert others. "Lydia did not shut the gate of Christ's kingdom in passing through, making it harder for others to follow." — *Rev. H. Elvet Lewis*. She besought *us*. She offered hospitality to the apostles, following the example of Abigail, the Shunammite woman, and Mary and Martha. This open alliance with Christianity was dangerous. "Prudent people might have warned her that her business might suffer, that she would make less money if she were known to belong to an unpopular sect, and that she might better worship the Lord in secret. This was not Lydia's way." — *Margaret E. Sangster*. "The open heart reveals her receptivity; the open house her generosity." — *R. F. Horton*.

A DEMONIAIC GIRL HEALED. Paul was much troubled by a celebrated soothsayer, a frenzied girl, who followed the missionaries in the streets, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation." Paul might have taken advantage of this testimony from the powers of evil, but he would have no credit from such a source, so he bade the demon come out of her, and she was at once restored to her right mind. This girl was a slave, so valuable in those superstitious days that she was owned by a company and not merely by one master. These owners, enraged that they could no longer make money from her ravings, telling fortunes by them, complained to the magistrates against Paul and Silas, and had them beaten severely and cast into the inner prison, a noisome hole, without light or ventilation, full of filth and alive with vermin.

25. And at midnight, after Paul and Silas had suffered these miseries for hours, the torture of the stocks being added to the horrors of the prison itself, they were so far from being downcast that they **prayed**, and **sang praises unto God**. They sang the Hebrew Psalms, as perhaps they were wont to do at that hour (see Acts 20: 7). **And the prisoners heard them**. Cheerfulness is a fine advertisement of Christianity; others are sure to want a religion which they see makes you happy.



The Dyer's Shop.

The Tyrian dye was obtained from a rare shellfish found near Tyre.

26. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

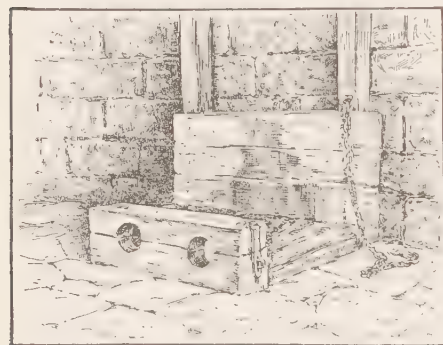
26. And suddenly there was a great earthquake. It opened the doors of the prison, poorly built as Eastern prisons are quite likely to be, and even loosened the staples that held the prisoners' chains. The jailer saw what had happened and was about to kill himself, for it was a law that a jailer should die that let his prisoners escape.

28. But Paul cried with a loud voice, . . . **We are all here.** "The jailer stared into the dark hole, calling loudly for a light.

Lights were brought, and, lantern in hand, he went in trembling to seek them; and his joy was so great that he knelt down on the muddy floor and besought Paul and Silas to come out."

— *Robert Bird.*

30. Profoundly moved by the terrible event and by the bearing of the missionaries, the jailer asked the question which is asked by every one who comes to Jesus, **Sirs, what must I do to be saved?** He was made conscious of his sins by the near approach of death. We shall not, if we are wise, wait for sickness or danger to spur our consciences. We need saving now, saving from our sins, our sorrows, our weakness, our fears, our doubts, in short, from our evil hearts; and we need to go to those that show that they



Stocks.

have been saved, like Paul and Silas, and ask how this great salvation is to be obtained.

31. Paul's answer sums up the whole subject: **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.** "Perhaps the jailer had already heard a good deal about Jesus, either from the missionaries themselves, or from the reports given by others of what they had said. But if he had not, Paul would set Christ fully before him."

— *William M. Taylor.* Indeed, Paul went to work and preached Christ to all the jailer's household, and so effectively that the jailer and all his family and servants were baptized at once. What a happy night it turned out to be! Paul and Silas felt like singing more than ever. Now they saw clearly why God had allowed them to suffer the scourging and the imprisonment.

THE WHOLE GOSPEL. "They said all that could be said to any wretched, sinful soul of man. They put into their answer to the jailer the whole gospel. They declared all that is essential to human salvation. They demand no 'doing' of the man save *faith or trust: faith in the person of Christ, trust in his redeeming work.*" — *J. G. Butler, D.D.*

III. WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN LIFE? Having had examples of beginning the Christian life from the time of Christ and of the early church, let us learn what the Christian life is, in both precept and example.

32. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes: and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

THE ETHIOPIAN TREASURER FINDS OUT, Acts 8: 26-40. "In the account of the scene on the road to Gaza, Philip is set before the reader like one of the ancient prophets such as Elijah or Elisha. Every step that he takes is carefully described as suggested by divine command or inspiration." — *Sir William M. Ramsay*. An angel of the Lord sent him to meet the Ethiopian. The spirit told him to go up to the chariot where the great man sat reading Isaiah, all befogged as to the meaning. Doubtless that same Spirit prompted the Ethiopian to turn to the wonderful fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, from which it was so easy for Philip to preach Jesus and lead up to the Ethiopian's baptism. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God," said the Ethiopian according to the King James Version; the Revised Version omits the saying as it is not in the earliest manuscripts, but doubtless it was the Ethiopian's belief. It is the belief of the universal Christian church. Christian life consists in that belief, followed up by the obedience to Christ's teachings which it involves.

CHRIST STATES IT, John 15: 4-16. In this wonderful passage Christ defines the Christian life in five ways: Christians are friends with him (v. 15); are chosen by him (v. 16); are obedient to him (v. 14); are abiding in him (v. 4); and are bearing much fruit among men (v. 8). Our choice of Christ is our response to Christ's choice of us, as Christ saw Nathanael under the fig-tree before Nathanael saw Christ. He calls us friends before we call him Friend. We love him because he first loved us. We abide in him because he abides in us. We bear fruit because we are united to the Vine. "We are to trust as if it all depended upon Christ, and work as if it all depended upon ourselves." This is the Christian life as Christ stated it. "Life, fruitfulness, and success in prayer all depend upon our relationship to Christ. If we abide in him we shall not wither or die; we shall bear fruit and we shall be able to pray. The consciousness of abiding is less important than the evidences of it." — *Robert E. Speer*.

PAUL STATES IT, Rom. 5: 1-11. No one saw so clearly as Paul that the Christian life is all Christ. His great doctrine was justification by faith. Does Christ say, "Be pure"? Paul answers, "Yea, for thou wilt purify us." Does Christ say, "Be just"? Paul answers, "Yea, justified by faith in thee." Does Christ say, "Be strong"? Paul answers, "Yea, for when we were without strength, Christ died for us." Does Christ say, "Love God and man"? Paul answers, "Yea, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." "We cannot



"What must I do to be saved?"

walk with Christ, and have small hearts. The heart of our Lord was as big as the world, and broke for its redemption." — *Rev. W. L. Watkinson, D.D.* "If a man asks me, 'Do you think you could hold on to Christ for six months?' I reply, 'No, not for six minutes. But do I think Christ can hold on to me? Yes, for all eternity.'" — *Rev. Archibald G. Brown.* True Christians "are all 'solifidians.' The word is obsolete, but it was eloquent in its time. It means, depending on faith alone. The guests at this table claim no personal merit." — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS PRACTISE IT, ACTS 2:37-47. This beautiful picture of the early church contains some elements, of course, which it is not necessary or perhaps possible for modern Christians to imitate. Signs and wonders are not needed by the modern church to authenticate its message. We do not celebrate the Lord's Supper in our homes. The possession of goods in common was not observed even by the early church very long, or anywhere but in Jerusalem, because there the common poverty made it necessary. But the other elements of the picture should be found in every Christian life: outward testimony to Christ; hearty fellowship with other Christians; practical helpfulness to all in need; earnest public worship; joy, thanksgiving, and the simple life; and, finally, favor with all the people and constant additions to the church. These are the six prime qualities of Christianity. "When the church is up to par and above par, there are conversions. That is the rule, and that rule is without a single exception. What we want in our day is churches of Jesus Christ up to par and above par." — *Rev. David Gregg, D.D.*

AS CHRIST WILL TEST IT, MATT. 25:31-46. Among the solemn words spoken by Christ just before his death was the wonderful picture of the final examination, which shall determine whether our lot shall be eternal life or eternal death. The decision, Christ said, will turn upon our attitude toward the needy — the hungry, thirsty, and naked, the strangers, the sick, the prisoners. Christ identifies himself with these, so that our ministering to them or failing to do so is done or not done to him. This is the test that Christ will apply to our religion on the last day. In the light of what we have been learning about Christianity, it is certainly a fair and reasonable test.

Illustration. "John Wesley, one winter day, met a poor girl in one of the schools under his care. She seemed almost frozen. He asked her if she had no clothing but the thin garments she was wearing. She said she had not. His hand was in his pocket in an instant, but there was no money there. He went to his room, but the pictures on the wall seemed to upbraid him. He took them down, saying to himself: 'How can the Master say to thee, "Well done, good and faithful servant"? Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the bitter cold!' So he sold the pictures to get money to relieve the girl's distress." — *J. R. Miller.*

WILL YOU NOT BEGIN IT NOW? "Ask me why I am a Christian, and I may say, 'Because the Christian life is satisfactory and full of daily sweetness,' or I may say, 'Because in the certain distance hangs the prize of everlasting life.' Both are good answers. But suppose I say, 'Because God bade me be.' That is a better answer. It includes both the others. . . . Come to your Lord because he calls you. As John and James came off the lake where they were fishing; as Matthew came out of the shop where he was gathering taxes; for only to the soul that first gives itself to him in unquestioning obedience can Christ give himself in unhindered love." — *Phillips Brooks.*

Christ has made a beginning of your Christian life — he made it long ago; but you also must make a beginning. "God never forces the citadel of a human heart. He will stand and knock, but there must be a hand within that opens, there must be a receptive mind and an obedient will, or God enters not to take possession." — *Arthur T. Pierson.*

Do not let mere intellectual difficulties keep you from Jesus. Go to him and let him solve them. "If we have learned in our heart of hearts to want Jesus, then some glorious day he will surely open our eyes to see the things we cannot see now." — *Rev. W. S. Rainsford, D.D.*

"Keen and intense life's race,
Sharp and severe its strife;
Lest I grow faint and slack my pace,
O Christ, be thou my Life!

"Dark and perplexed the way,
Hard and involved the right;
The smoke of passion clouds the day, —
O Christ, be thou my Light!"
— *Charles Sumner Hoyt.*

And do not think that Christ's call means some one else and does not mean you. "Come, each of you," that is his message. "Come, all of you. Ho, every one that thirsteth. Whatever you are thirsting for, whatever the need of your soul. Is it for work, or for rest? for help, or for some one whom you can help? for forgiveness, or for grace to forgive? for some one to love, or for some one to love you? whatever you are thirsting for, ho, every one that thirsteth, come!" — *Rev. William R. Richards, D.D.*

"You ask me how I gave my heart to Christ?
I do not know.
There came a yearning for him in my soul,
So long ago.
I found earth's flowerets would fade and die,
I wept for something that could satisfy;
And then — and then — somehow I seemed to dare
To lift my broken heart to him in prayer.
I do not know —
I cannot tell you — how;
I only know
He is my Saviour now!" — *G. F. Brown.*

LESSON II. — July 14.

READING GOD'S WORD. — Acts 8:26-39; Ps. 19:7-11.

PRINT Acts 8:26-31, 35-39; Ps. 19:7-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*
— JOHN 8:32.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 119:9-16, 97-105.

Additional Material for Teachers: Ps. 37:31; 119:9-16; Prov. 13:13;
Isa. 55:8-11; John 5:39, 46, 47; Rom. 15:4.

Primary Topic: God's Great Letter to the World.

Primary Memory Verse: Teach me thy way, O Jehovah. — Ps. 27:11.

Junior Memory Verse: Ps. 119:105.

Story Material: Matt. 7:24-27; Luke 24:13-32; Acts 17:10-12.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: The Bible: What It Is and How to Make It Our Own.

Additional Material: Deut. 6:6-9; Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2, 3; 119:97-104;
Isa. 40:8; John 20:30, 31; Eph. 6:17; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:14-17;
Heb. 4:12.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The aim of the teacher in all grades on this Sunday will be to inculcate a deep love of the Bible and give instruction in the way to read it and study it. Naturally, this instruction will take thought first for the Sunday-school lesson, and the pupils will be shown how to use their Bibles in preparation for it. But the teacher will go on to the devotional reading of the Bible, showing how helpful that is for wise, happy, and successful living. Where necessary, very practical hints regarding the use of the concordance, Bible atlas, Bible index, commentary, and Bible dictionary will be given, and some classes will be started in Bible marking, a practice of especial value in connection with the lessons of this quarter.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Bible: What It Is and How to Make It Our Own.

I. WHAT THE BIBLE IS, PS. 19:7-11.

Perfect law.
Sure testimony.
Right precepts.
Pure commandments.
Clean fear.
True judgments.
Richer than gold, sweeter than honey.
Friendly warnings.
Great reward.

II. HOW TO MAKE THE BIBLE OUR OWN, ACTS 8:26-39.

Read it.
Get help for the study.
Associate it with Christ.
Begin anywhere.
Put it into life.
Put it into words.

LEARN BY HEART.

Ps. 19:7-11; Deut. 6:6-9; John 8:32.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time.—Psalm 19 was probably written early in David's life. The lesson in Acts took place in the summer of A.D. 36 or 37.

Place.—The road through the untilled region between Jerusalem and Gaza.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Books on the *Psalms* by Barton, Perowne, Thrupp, Prothero, Briggs, Spurgeon, etc. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible* on Ps. 19:7-9. *The Bible*

Year, by Amos R. Wells, is a plan for reading the Bible through in a year. *The Bible Marksman*, by Wells, is a guide to Bible-marking. *The Living Bible*, by Wells, is a devotional guide to the Bible. *Bible Chains*, by Wells, is a guide to Bible memorizing. Commentaries on the *Acts* by Rackham, Furneaux, Knowling, Bartlet, Peloubet, MacLaren (*Expositions*), etc.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Bible's claims as literature.
The Bible's claims as history.
The Bible's claims as divine law.
The influence of the Bible in the modern world.
When to read the Bible.
How to read the Bible.
Rewards of Bible-reading.

Ps. 19:7. The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

I. **WHAT THE BIBLE IS**, Ps. 19:7-11. "As in the first part of this psalm there is a vision of God's glory in the rising and coursing of the sun, so in this second portion David sings the glory of God's personal revelation to his people. There is no passage in the Bible that has a more majestic, rhythmic beauty. It is the poetry of deepest insight."—*Rev. William E. Barton, D.D.*

7. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The Bible "calls the soul back from its wanderings by reminding it of its ingratitude, by setting before it its high destiny, by bringing it to its true Shepherd and Guardian."—*Perowne*. It can do this because it is **perfect**, it is "given by inspiration of God, and is [therefore] profitable . . . for correction" (2 Tim. 3:16). It is perfect "that the man of God may be perfect" (2 Tim. 3:17). "The inspiration here referred to, in connection with the composition of Scripture, may be thus defined: It is a spiritual influence qualifying and moving certain persons to infallibly communicate divine truth."—*Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

"We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old flower-fields of the soul;
And, weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from the quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read."—*Whittier*.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. "Testimony" is God's law testifying to God's will and man's duty. "The simple" is "a character often mentioned in Proverbs (Prov. 1:4, etc.): the man whose mind is *open* to the entrance of good or evil. He has not closed his heart against instruction, but he has no fixed principle to repel temptation. He needs to be made wise."—*Cambridge Bible*. For this man, and therefore for all men, God's word is **sure**, certain, unailing. Isaiah compares it (Isa. 55:8-11) to the rain and snow falling on the earth and transformed into flower and seed and bread; so God's word "shall not return void, but shall accomplish" what God designs it to accomplish. It is the one permanent thing in the universe; for, as Isaiah also wrote (Isa. 40:8), "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever."

Illustration. Near the close of his life John Wesley said he was hardly sure of anything but what he learned from the Scripture. "Nay," said he, "I positively affirm that I know nothing else so certainly that I would dare to stake my salvation upon it."

8. The statutes (R. V., "precepts") of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The "precepts" of the Bible mean its "distinct directions in detail."—*Century Bible*. As Paul wrote to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:16), each of these inspired writings

8. The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

9. The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

is profitable, either for negative reproof and warning or for positive correction and instruction. They rejoice the heart because "joy must spring from the consciousness of being in one's right place and travelling in the right road." — *Cambridge Bible*.

Illustration. Some Indian chiefs, visiting Washington to consult with the President, were brought into a religious convention then in session. One of them spoke to the convention through an interpreter: "What is the secret of all this happiness I see? Our men do not look like yours; their faces are sad, their hearts heavy. Our women are not like yours. Our children are growing up in ignorance. Our homes are miserable. Tell us, if you can, what is the medicine we must take." General O. O. Howard, with his empty coat-sleeve, one arm having been left on the field of battle, sprang forward with an uplifted Bible in his hand and exclaimed, "Mr. Speaker, tell him that this is the good medicine."

The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. "Commandment" is God's word put forth with authority. In *pure* "the metaphor is perhaps that of pure water, in whose uninterrupted medium a man can see himself reflected."

— *Hastings*. No other book so clearly shows us ourselves, opening the eyes of our consciences. The writer of Hebrews (Heb. 4:12) compares the Bible to a sharp sword, piercing to the innermost secrets of one's life.

Illustration. "An old man and his wife who had long neglected their souls happened into a church, where they heard a sermon which moved them to get a copy of the Bible and examine it. As they read they were so overwhelmed with conviction that the man said, 'Wife, if these things are true, we're lost!' But as they continued to read, the invitations and promises grew so convincing that he added joyously, 'Wife, if these things are true, we're saved!'" — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D.*

9. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever. God's law is called "the fear of the Lord" because its aim is to plant that fear in men's hearts (Deut. 4:10). That is why the Bible is called (Eph. 6:17) "the sword of the Spirit." In *clean* "the metaphor is probably that of the unblemished offering." — *Hastings*. God's law endures forever, while the natural objects named in the first part of the psalm, even the sun and stars, are perishable and will pass away. "We can imagine a time when other systems shall circle other suns, and other physical forces shall obey other laws. But we can never imagine a time when right shall be anything but right, or wrong anything but wrong." — *George Matheson*. "The Bible stands. Notwithstanding all the forces of unbelief that are round about us to-day, I venture to say that at this hour the Church of Christ has more members, is doing more good, is circulating more Bibles, is extending her cause more widely, is cherishing in her heart more earnestly the dream of universal empire and universal conquest for Christ than in any previous period of her history." — *Prof. James Orr*.

The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. The judgments, decisions, of nature take no account of character. The sun shines alike on the evil and the good, the rain falls on the just and the unjust. But God's judgments will some day be seen to be altogether just and righteous, even if we cannot now understand their justice and righteousness. The poet represents a little girl running to her father:

"'If God is wise and kind,' said she,
'Why did he let my roses die?'
A moment's pause, a smile, a sigh,
And then, 'I do not know, my dear,
Some questions are not answered here.'
'But is it wrong to ask?' 'Not so,
My child. That we should seek to know
Proves *right* to know, beyond a doubt;
And some day we shall yet find out
Why roses die.' And then I wait
Sure of my answer, soon or late;
Secure that love doth hold for me
The key to life's great mystery;
And oh! so glad to leave it there!
Though my dead roses were so fair."

10. More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there* is great reward.

10. More to be desired are they than gold, even the "fine gold," which "seems to be the name for 'native gold,' or that found in river-washings and nuggets, which was regarded as the purest." *Pulpit Commentary*. Sweeter also than honey and (R. V. margin) "the droppings of the honey-comb." "The purest honey is the virgin honey which flows freely and naturally from the cells." — *Century Bible*. Compare Ps. 119: 103. "The Bible has woven itself into our deepest affections, and colored our dearest dreams; so that love and friendship, sympathy and devotion, memory and hope, put on the beautiful garments of its treasured spirit, breathing frankincense and myrrh." — *Henry van Dyke*.

11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned. The true child of God comes to see that the Father's will is best, and follows it gladly though at the time it may seem hard. "In his will is our peace." — *Dante*. We have learned that "whoso despiseth the word bringeth destruction on himself" (Prov. 13: 13). The young man (Ps. 119: 9) "cleanses his way" by using the Bible warnings. "The final state which we are to seek by discipline is that in which our will shall be *one* with the will of God; not merely shall submit to it, not merely shall follow after it, but shall live and move with it, even as the pulse of the blood in the extremities acts with the central movement of the heart." — *Gladstone*.

"So, when my Saviour calls, I rise,
I calmly do my best;
Leaving to him, with silent eyes
Of hope and fear, the rest.

"I step, I mount where he has led;
Men count my haltings o'er; —
I know them; yet, though self I dread,
I love his precept more." — *Newman*.

In keeping of them there is great reward. "Not only 'the recompense of the reward' laid up for men in heaven, but a present reward in the act of keeping them. Obedience, like virtue, is its own reward." — *Pulpit Commentary*. Christ pictured the reward of obedience in his parable of the two foundations (Matt. 7: 24-27); it is the reward of safety, of permanence; the floods of sorrow shall not carry us away. Again he stated the reward as freedom, "the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 32); the Bible man is not bound by error, or fear, or sin. Paul declared that the reward is hope, "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15: 4); since certainly the Bible is our only source of hope for time and eternity. The Lord himself told Joshua (Josh. 1: 8) that the rewards of Bible study are prosperity and success — a promise that has been verified times beyond number. David (Ps. 1: 3) echoes the same happy prediction.

THE WORDS OF A GREAT STATESMAN. "What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed or can fail to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply? What profession, what position is not daily and hourly enriched by these words which repetition never weakens, which carry with them now, as in the days of their first utterance, the freshness of youth and immortality? When the solitary student opens all his heart to drink them in, they will reward his toil, and in forms yet more hidden and withdrawn, in the retirement of the chamber, in the stillness of the night season, upon the bed of sickness, and in the face of death, the Bible will be there, its several words how often winged with their several and special messages, to heal and to soothe, to uplift and uphold, to invigorate and stir. Nay, more, perhaps, than this; amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the market-place, where every thought of every soul seems to be set on the excitements of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure, there, too, even there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may flee away and be at rest." — *William E. Gladstone*.

II. HOW TO MAKE THE BIBLE OUR OWN, Acts 8: 26-39. One of the most suggestive examples of Bible-study in the Bible is the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, the treasurer of Queen Candace. Philip was one of the seven deacons, to be

ACTS 8 : 26. And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

27. And he arose and went : and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28. Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

29. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

distinguished from Philip the apostle. He had been preaching successfully in Samaria, working miracles, and defying Simon the sorcerer when he offered money for the secret of his power. Ethiopia lay south of Egypt, and probably the division of it known as Meroë is here meant. Candace is a general name for its rulers, like Pharaoh in Egypt and Cæsar in Rome. This eunuch was Candace's chancellor of the exchequer or secretary of the treasury, an officer of great power and doubtless great ability. He was probably a "proselyte of the gate," or one who in general adopted the worship of the Jews without becoming a Jew, and he had been to Jerusalem to worship in the temple. He was hungry for the truth, just the sort of man to get the most out of the Bible. Philip, travelling from Samaria under a mysterious impulse from the Spirit, met this man where his road joined the road followed by the Ethiopian, the road from Jerusalem southwest to Gaza, the great highway of commerce to Egypt and all Africa.

28. The Ethiopian, sitting in his chariot, read Esaias (R. V., "Isaiah") the prophet. He was not reading the Hebrew, but, as the citation which follows shows, he was reading the Greek translation of Isaiah made in Egypt. If we would make the Bible our own the first rule is, *read it!* Do as this Ethiopian did. It is well to read the Bible straight through, to get a bird's-eye view of it, as surveyors make a "preliminary reconnoissance" of a tract they are to survey carefully, plotting it out roughly with a pocket compass and with pacing. In this rapid reading of the entire volume we are sure to make the discovery of whole books which henceforth are favorites, books which at once we wish to read and study with care. Our Bible reading is in too stingy amounts, a few verses a day ; we should read it in large portions, as we read newspapers and novels.



Philip and the Ethiopian.

WHAT PRESIDENT WILSON SAYS. "I am sorry for the men who do not read the Bible every day. I wonder why they deprive themselves of the strength and of the pleasure. It is one of the most singular books in the world, for every time you open it some old text that you have read a score of times suddenly beams with a new meaning. There is no other book that I know of, of which this is true; there is no other book that yields its meaning so personally, that seems to fit itself so intimately to the very spirit that is seeking its guidance." — *Woodrow Wilson*.

BIBLE LIGHT ON BIBLE READING. Ps. 37 : 31, "The law of his God is in his heart." "The best thing in the best place." Commit the Bible to memory; then you

30. And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31. And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

will have it for emergencies, and for wakeful midnight hours. The results: "None of his steps shall slide," and "That I might not sin against thee" (Ps. 119: 11).

Col. 3: 16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," no meagre word but the full Bible, no hasty call but a long visit, not a few verses snatched on the way to bed but the leisurely, eager reading of a whole book at a sitting.

Acts 17: 10-12, the Bereans, who "received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily." Nothing can take the place of the regular reading of God's word. The Christian needs it as much as his regular meals. Without it his soul will pine away as his body without food. Fix a regular time for it; and a regular place, also, where you will not be interrupted, and where the familiar surroundings will at once put you into a devotional frame of mind. Nothing good comes without planning, least of all this supreme good.

30. Then Philip, led by the Spirit who had guided him to that place, ran up to the chariot and kept along beside it as it moved. The vehicles of those days were clumsy and slow. **Understandest thou what thou readest?** Philip ventured to ask the prince, recognizing the passage from Isaiah as the Ethiopian read aloud. It was (vs. 32, 33) the wonderful prediction of Christ's sufferings in Isa. 53: 7, 8, a passage so foreign to the ordinary Jewish conception of a triumphant, military Messiah that the treasurer might easily fail to understand it.

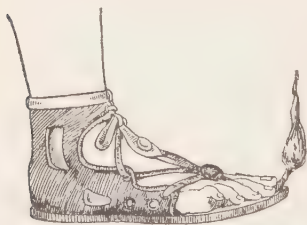
31. The Ethiopian answered promptly and humbly. **How can I, except some man should guide me?** So he besought (R. V.) Philip to sit beside him in the chariot and explain the difficult passage.

HELP IN BIBLE READING. Many who fail to make the Bible their own, fail because they do not get the help of others who have made it their own. Every Sunday-school teacher is to do for his pupils what Philip did for the Ethiopian. And every teacher, in turn, must be taught from wise books. The Bible comes to us from distant lands, from ancient times, and from strange languages. We need commentaries to bridge over these chasms of time and space, of customs and language. Fortunately there are a score of admirable commentaries on the entire Bible, easily accessible; and often the best commentary on a single book is not in a series but is a separate volume. No user of these Notes can long be ignorant of the best commentaries.

THE GREAT TEACHER. The best Bible commentary is the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Human commentaries remove the external barriers that hide Bible truth, but the Holy Spirit draws it into our lives. "Teach me thy way, O Jehovah" (Ps. 27: 11). The two disciples from Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-32) needed the risen Lord himself to "interpret to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Prayer for God's presence and communion with his Holy Spirit should accompany all our Bible study.

34. **Of whom speaketh the prophet this?** was the wise question of the eunuch. He had not been doing mere surface reading, but he had been thinking about what

he read. The man whom David (Ps. 1: 2) regarded as blessed was like this Ethiopian: "In his law doth he meditate day and night." That was what the Lord commanded Joshua: "Thou shalt meditate in this book of the law day and night." We cannot make the Bible our own if we drop it from our minds as soon as we have read it. "Day and night" its thoughts must go with us, as our "delight and counsellors" (Ps. 119: 24). "Every growing Christian is a ruminating animal. One strong Bible text lodged in the memory, and turned over and over and well digested, will be a breakfast for your soul, and in the strength of it you will go through the whole day." — *Theodore L. Cuyler*.



Foot Lamp.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet."

35. **Then Philip . . . began at the same scripture.** A good rule for us in our Bible-reading: start in anywhere, just so we start. Begin with the book that

35. Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

36. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37. And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

happens to attract us, and go on from it to another book, and so on till the whole Bible becomes ours. **And preached unto him Jesus.** That is the object of all Bible-reading, to get close to Jesus. We make the Bible our own in order that we may make him our own. The thought of him runs through the entire Bible and binds it together; so let it run through all our Bible-reading. "These are written," said John near the close of his Gospel (John 20:31) "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." And our Lord himself said of the scriptures, "These are they which bear witness of me," and again, "Moses wrote of me" (John 5:39, 46). The most blessed result of Bible-reading and study is a deeper fellowship with Jesus Christ.

36. **They came unto a certain water.** This was Marubah, about a day's journey from Hebron toward Gaza, a fine stream of water, a local name for the great Wady Surar. On seeing this, the eunuch said, **What doth hinder me to be baptized?** The treasurer was simply carrying out the rule so earnestly insisted upon by modern psychologists, "No impression without expression"; that is, when you learn a duty, it is dangerous for you not to do it forthwith. In harmony with this thought is Ps. 119:9, 11, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." The Bible-reading that is not put into life might as well be Shakespeare-reading or Dickens-reading. It is well to continue our Bible-reading each day till we come to a passage that touches life, and then stop and go forth to practise it. "I would that every student of the Bible would take the motto which Bengel took for his guidance in study: 'Apply thyself wholly to the Scriptures, and apply the Scriptures wholly to thyself.' Some are applying themselves wholly to the Scriptures with microscopic intensity of search and research, but they neglect the other half." — *A. J. Gordon.*

37. The R. V. omits this verse, since it is not found in the best Greek manuscripts; but "the appositeness and extreme simplicity of the question and answer point to their genuineness." — *Rackham.* "It would seem that Philip had learned caution from Simon's case, for he asks a heart-test of the man's faith." — *J. G. Butler, D.D.* **If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.** Like every good teacher, Philip wished to draw from his pupil in his own words what he had been trying to teach him. He succeeded, for the eunuch's testimony rang clear and true: **I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**

MAKING THE BIBLE OUR OWN THROUGH EXPRESSION. We have reached the climax of our lessons on Bible-reading. We have learned what it has to offer us, and that we must read it regularly, daily, methodically, in large amounts, with the best help we can get, thoughtfully, and prayerfully, seeking to find Christ in it, getting the Spirit's aid for understanding it, and trying to embody it in our life's obedience. Having done all this we may put it into speech, we may give our personal



Phylacteries.

Worn on the Forehead.

39. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

testimony, as the Ethiopian did to Philip, and we may teach others, as he doubtless did as soon as he reached home. "There is a tradition that this minister to Candace, whose name was Judiah, preached the gospel, on his return to Ethiopia, with great



Phylacteries.
Worn on the Arm.

success, and that his royal mistress was among his converts." — *Schaff*. Thus he fulfilled, as we may fulfil, the great injunction of Deut. 6: 6-9: "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest

down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house, and upon thy gates."

"This is the glorious goal,
The end for which 'tis given,
To win the human soul
For holiness and heaven;
Firm hath this rock forever stood,
The 'living oracles of God.'" — *Albert Midlane*.

LESSON III. — July 21.

PRAYING TO GOD. — Luke 11: 1-13; Ps. 145: 18, 19.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need.* — *HEB. 4: 16.*

Devotional Reading: Luke 11: 5-13.

Additional Material for Teachers: Ps. 37: 4, 5; 81: 10; Matt. 7: 7-11; 6: 5-13; 2 Cor. 12: 8, 9; Heb. 11: 6; Jas. 4: 3, 8.

Primary Memory Verse: Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon him. — Ps. 145: 18.

Story Material: Matt. 14: 23-25; Acts 12: 1-12.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: Why and How to Pray, and the Results.

Additional Material: Ps. 50: 15; Isa. 55: 6; 65: 24; Matt. 18: 19, 20; John 15: 7; Rom. 8: 26; Phil. 4: 6.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The first thing of which the teacher should make certain is that his pupils understand of what prayer consists, for many of them will have been thinking of it merely as petition. Give them practical directions for prayer, and try to fix in their minds and wills a working programme of prayer. Seek to make the thought of a loving, ever-present God very real to them. Give them all the illustrations you can from your own experience of answers to prayer. Above all, aim to lift them into the highest

regions of prayer, described in the notes at the close of this lesson.

LEARN BY HEART.

Ps. 145: 18, 19; Luke 11: 9-13; Phil. 4: 6.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

What prayer is.
Reasons for prayer, on the divine side.
Reasons for prayer, on the human side.
Bible illustrations of answered prayer.
Objections to prayer answered.
The certain results of prayer.
The highest forms of prayer.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Psalm 145 is the last of the eight acrostic psalms, the verses beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The ascription of the psalm to David is of later origin and untrustworthy; it is probably of the time of the Maccabees.

Luke 11: 1-13 was spoken in Peræa, November or December of A.D. 29, near the close of Christ's ministry. It is largely parallel to portions of the Sermon on the Mount, spoken in the summer of the preceding year.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

On Ps. 145 see *The Century Bible*, *The Cambridge Bible*, Briggs in *The International Critical Commentary*, etc. *Books on the Lord's Prayer* by Bishop Gore (*The Sermon on the Mount*), Glad-den, Dean Bernard, Dean Stubbs, van Dyke, James Wells, Maurice, Presland, etc. A magnificent volume is *Prayer*, in *The Great Christian Doctrines*, edited by Hastings. Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. Phelps's *The Still*

Hour. Trumbull's *Illustrative Answers to Prayer*. Fosdick's *The Meaning of Prayer*. "Prayer and the Answer to Prayer," a noble essay by Niebergall in *The Constructive Quarterly*, March, 1916.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Why and How to Pray, and the Results.

I. WHY TO PRAY, PS. 145: 18, 19.

God is near.
God is eager to give.
God is eager to save.

II. HOW TO PRAY, LUKE 11: 1-8.

Taught by Christ.	Earnestly.
As a child.	Happily.
Reverently.	Trustingly.
Outreachingly.	In secret.
Submissively.	With others.
Practically.	Promptly.
Humbly.	In faith.
With a sense of danger.	Spirit-taught.

III. THE RESULTS OF PRAYER, LUKE 11: 9-13.

The sure answer.
All prayers answered.
Answers of good.
Answers of the highest good.
Prayer and praise.

Ps. 145: 18. The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

19. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

I. WHY TO PRAY, PS. 145: 18, 19. Prayer is the heart of the Christian life. Rev. George H. C. MacGregor sent out seven missionaries from his church and had started to win seven more when he passed away; and yet he said, "I would rather train one man to pray than ten men to preach." Prayer is the loftiest, most magnificent and wonderful thing man does. We are to discover to-day what the world's greatest book has to say about the world's greatest art.

BECAUSE GOD IS NEAR. 18. The Lord is nigh unto all . . . that call upon him in truth. He does not approach the false, hypocritical seeker, the careless or indifferent seeker, the proud and Pharisaical seeker; but he draws very near to the humble, sincere, needy soul.

"Closer is the Lord's protection
Than a near investing wall;
Closer than a moat around me,
Closer than a tower tall;
Closer than a suit of armor,
Or my hands and feet can be;
For against my own assailing
His protection keepeth me!" — Amos R. Wells.

BECAUSE GOD IS EAGER TO GIVE. 19. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him. "Fear and love are the inseparable elements of true religion. Fear preserves love from degenerating into presumptuous familiarity: love prevents fear from becoming a servile and clinging dread." — *Cambridge Bible*. God loves his children so much that no slightest desire of theirs passes unnoticed, or, if it would make them really happy, unfulfilled. Thus we can confidently take to God our smallest wishes and least needs.

Illustration. Adoniram Judson, the great missionary to Burma, had a strong desire to do something for the Jews, but this desire was for years ungratified. In the last fortnight of his life, however, his wife chanced to read to him from a news-

LUKE 11: 1. AND it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

paper a paragraph from Constantinople. At a missionary meeting there it had been stated that an account of Judson and his work, published in Germany, had fallen into the hands of some Jews and had been the means of their conversion. One of them had translated it for others who lived along the Black Sea, and they had sent a messenger to Constantinople asking for a teacher to tell them about the Messiah. As Dr. Judson heard this his eyes filled with tears, and he said with great earnestness, "I have never been deeply interested in any object, and prayed sincerely and earnestly for it, but, at some time — no matter how distant the day, somehow, in some shape, probably the last I should have devised — it came."

BECAUSE GOD IS READY TO SAVE. He also will hear their cry (for help), and will save them. God is not only interested in the least affairs of his children, but, as a necessary consequence, is quick to save in the great emergencies of life. If nothing is too small to bring to him, neither is anything too great. God is ready to save us from the darkest sorrow, the heaviest oppression, the most insidious temptation, the fiercest assaults of the evil one; and what he is ready to do for one man he is ready to do for all men, for the great, suffering, sinning world. We have only to cry to him. "The bane of the world is care, the cure for care is prayer, the reward of prayer is peace." — *John McNeill*. "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day." — *Abraham Lincoln*.

II. HOW TO PRAY, Luke 11: 1-8. The great argument for prayer is in the nature of God, his nearness, his sympathy, his love, his power. Men do not need

much argument for prayer; in all nations they turn to God instinctively. But they do need to be taught how to pray. This passage in Luke is full of instruction.

PRAYER TAUGHT BY CHRIST. 1. As he was praying. Christ could teach the art of prayer because he so constantly practised it; see another illustration in Matt. 14: 23-25. And if he, with all his power and wisdom, needed to pray, surely we do. One of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray. The reason why



Jesus at Prayer.

Bida. From an old print.

we get so little out of prayer many times is because we do not study the art of prayer under the Great Teacher. There is nothing else so important that we do so carelessly and blunderingly. "Do we realize the responsibility we take upon ourselves every time we pray? Our prayer is practically answered when we decide that it is our proper prayer, and that God wants us to offer it. A chief thing in prayer is deciding beforehand what it shall be, and what are our attitude and spirit in its offering." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*. Here is where we chiefly need the help of Christ. Our most earnest prayer should be, "Lord, teach us to pray."

PRAY AS A CHILD. 2. When ye pray, say, Father (R. V.). "It was practically a new thought about God which our Saviour gave his disciples. They had always known him as the Eternal, the Creator, the Self-existent One, the Supreme Ruler, the Judge, the Lord of Hosts or of Battles, the Captain of the armies of heaven; but this thought of him as the Father was very far from all their common thoughts of him." — *Washington Gladden*. Yet Christ says that this must be our first thought

2. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3. Give us day by day our daily bread.

4. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

in prayer, that God is a loving Father; and we are to go to him as little children go to their earthly parents, unafraid, and sure of instant sympathy and love.

PRAY REVERENTLY. Hallowed be thy name. "The name of God means God himself as he is manifested. To pray that his name may be hallowed is to pray that his revelation of himself may be accepted of men, and his religion professed openly and secretly." — *Bishop Gore*. The first act in every prayer may well be to think what a great Being we are addressing, how majestic, wise, and powerful, that our soul may be filled with awe as well as love.

PRAY OUTREACHINGLY. Thy kingdom come. The Lord's prayer is an unselfish prayer. "Other interests besides our own are put in the first place, the veneration of God's name, the coming of his kingdom, the doing of his will. It is the effacement of self, rather than the advancement of self, which the Lord puts before us as the true spirit of prayer." — *Dean Bernard*. Once Dr. Cuyler and Newman Hall took tea with Spurgeon and joined the family prayer following. Spurgeon offered a wonderful prayer which disclosed the secret of his success. It was full of the church, of the kingdom of God, of the world, a prayer of vast outreachings. All our prayers should have the missionary spirit. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" (Ps. 81: 10). "Not for lack of a satisfying philosophy do our prayers run dry, but for lack of love." — *Prof. Harry Emerson Fosdick*.

PRAY SUBMISSIVELY. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth (see Matt. 6: 10; omitted here in the R. V.). "In heaven God's will is done spontaneously and perfectly: therefore it is heaven. Would we share the happiness of angels? Let us learn to pray intelligently and sincerely, 'Thy will be done.'" — *Rev. Henry van Dyke, D.D.* This prayer is to qualify all other prayers, as it qualified in Gethsemane Christ's prayer that the cup of sorrow might pass from him. Whatever we ask for we have not asked for completely till we add, "Thy will be done, to give or to withhold."

PRAY PRACTICALLY. 3. Give us day by day our daily bread. The Lord's prayer has seven petitions, three for God's glory, three for our own souls, and only this for our earthly need. It is a specimen of all our common daily needs. In offering this prayer "we acknowledge that our daily bread is a gift from God, and that therefore the trade or profession or calling by which we get it is something about which, in its daily transactions, we are not ashamed to pray to God." — *Dean Stubbs*. In harmony with this petition we are to take to God daily all the small needs and sorrows and joys of the day, as a child talks over his little affairs with his father.

Illustration. Once the beloved gospel singer, Charles M. Alexander, while waiting in a Liverpool bank, filled a big blotter with the words many times repeated, "Pray through." The next day he was told that after he had gone a business man entered the bank who was thoroughly discouraged with business troubles; but he saw the blotter and said at once, "That is the very message I needed. I will pray through. I have tried to worry through in my own strength, and have merely mentioned my troubles to God. Now I am going to pray the situation through until I get light."

PRAY HUMBLY. 4. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. "As beggars we pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' but this petition takes us a step lower yet: we are to pray as sinners, 'Forgive us our debts.'" — *James Wells, D.D.* We cannot pray successfully till we are at peace with God, till our sins are forgiven. Confession should have part in every prayer, a review of our sins and humble reliance upon God to forgive them for Christ's sake.

PRAY WITH A SENSE OF DANGER. And lead (R. V., "bring") us not into temptation. Matt. 6: 13 adds, "but deliver us from evil," here omitted in the R. V. The Christian will always be conscious of the devil as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5: 8). The Christian will not feel equal to temptation, will shrink from it, implore Christ's help against it. "The prayer,

5. And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;
6. For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

'Deliver us from evil,' is the most essential we can offer; and if temptation is necessary to convince us of our evil, and thus warn us to escape, we should submit with courageous patience, trusting our Lord to overrule it for this great end." — *Rev. John Presland.*

PRAY EARNESTLY. 5-8. "The parable of the Friend at Midnight rests on a familiar incident of common life; and, spoken to humble men, may easily have come within the limits of their own experience." — *Trench.* The petitioner has a real need; he would feed a hungry guest, and not be lacking in the sacred duty of hospitality. His importunity is justified, and is fully rewarded. The Syro-Phœnician mother made use of importunity, and Christ yielded gladly to her request. "God withholds his gifts for a time, that thou mayest learn to desire great things greatly." — *Augustine.* Thus our golden text: "Let us draw near with

boldness unto the throne of grace." Thus "prayer was made *earnestly* of the church unto God" for Peter in prison (Acts 12: 5).

OTHER BIBLE LIGHT ON PRAYER. *Pray Happily.* "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37: 4). Happiness is an evidence of peace with God and union with him, and it is to such alone that he can give prayer answers.

Pray Trustingly. "Trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37: 5). The more we pray, the more we shall trust, for we shall have increasing experience of answered prayer; and the more the trust, the more we shall pray, for we shall feel ever nearer to our Father.

Pray in Secret. "Pray to thy Father which is in secret" (Matt. 6: 5-8). Private prayer is the fountain of Christian living.

It is the source of all public prayer that is helpful. Every Christian should have a "closet" — some place where he goes regularly and often to commune with his Father in heaven.

Pray with Others. "If two of you shall agree . . . it shall be done" (Matt. 18: 19, 20). The same Christ who commanded private prayer urged social prayer. Family prayer and the prayer meetings of the church are the most fruitful assemblies of earth. The ability to lead others in prayer is a blessed power, and most Christians can gain it with patience and trust.

Pray Promptly. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found" (Isa. 55: 6). Prayer does not admit of procrastination. As in conversation the right word must be said at the right time or it is too late, so in talking with God we must pray as the need arises and as the Spirit prompts. So the best prayers are mere ejaculations, offered, perhaps, in the midst of a crowd.

Pray in Faith. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11: 6). If we would pray, God must be as real to us as any earthly being, and his love must be as real as he is.



A Moslem at Prayer.

7. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Christ promised to do whatever we might ask (John 15: 7), provided only we abide in him and his words abide in us. "Prayer must be based on divine revelation, and find its warrant in the promises and assurances of God's love and grace. This distinguishes Christian prayer from everything that goes by the name of prayer in heathen religions." — *Hastings*.

Pray as the Spirit Teaches. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not how to pray as we ought" (Rom. 8: 26). "The Spirit of Christ, like Christ himself, teaches his disciples to pray, for who could teach us, after Christ, but his Spirit, whom he sent to teach us, and to direct our prayers?" — *St. Ambrose*. "Prayer is the work of the Holy Spirit, but he works by means. Let not our prayers and praises be the flashes of a hot and hasty brain, but the steady burning of a well-kindled fire." — *Spurgeon*.

III. THE RESULTS OF PRAYER. Luke 11: 9-13. "In books or sermons on prayer we find a great deal on the blessing of prayer as a spiritual exercise even if there be no answer. This teaching is of course quite true, yet it is remarkable that we find nothing of it with our Lord. The more carefully we gather together all he spoke on prayer, the clearer it becomes that he wished us to think of prayer simply as a means to an end, and that the answer was to be the proof that we and our prayer are acceptable to the Father in heaven." — *Hastings*.

The SURE Answer of Prayer. 9. Ask, and it shall be given you. Christ emphasizes the thought by repeating it in two different ways: seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. "The three repetitions of the command are more than mere repetitions; since to seek is more than to ask, and to knock than to seek; and thus in this ascending scale of earnestness an exhortation is given, not merely to pray, but to increasing urgency in prayer even till the suppliant carry away the blessing he seeks." — *Trench*. This answer is not only sure, it anticipates the request: "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isa. 65: 24). "There are many things which God has revealed to us that he intends to give us. He has promised that he will give us all those things which belong to his kingdom and its righteousness. For these things we can pray, not only urgently, but with the certainty of faith that we must win them for ourselves and others by importunate asking." — *Bishop Gore*. Of course we must not ask God to violate his general laws in our private interest, or do for us what is against his revealed will. And if we pray for something as to which we do not know God's will (for recovery from sickness, for instance), we shall always add, if we pray in the spirit of Christ, "Thy will be done." "A life marked by daily answer to prayer is the proof of our spiritual maturity; that we have indeed attained to the true abiding in Christ; that our will is truly at one with God's will; that our faith has grown strong to see and take what God has prepared for us; that the name of Christ and his nature have taken full possession of us; and that we have been found fit to take a place among those whom God admits to his counsels, and according to whose prayer he rules the world." — *Andrew Murray*. "It must excite the attention of every thoughtful person that the belief, God hears prayer, is found among all nations who have a knowledge of Deity, and is fundamentally peculiar to the whole human race. There must be a greater number of experiences of answers to prayer than is generally supposed, else the belief in the utility of prayer would not be so general, vivid, and prevalent." — *M. H. Reinhard*.

ALL Prayers are Answered. 10. For every one that asketh receiveth. "Faith-filled prayer is as truly one of the providential forces in nature as is electricity; and

11. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12. Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

in conformity with the letter and spirit of God's promises with reference to such prayer, the greater force may as truly operate, on occasions, for the advantage of a particular child of God, as does the lesser force when that child sends a personal message and receives a specific answer over the wires of the telegraph or of the long-distance telephone." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*. "It is a very serious thing to pray; because we may be taken at our word," — *Alexander McKenzie*. To be sure, James wrote (Jas. 4: 3), "Ye ask and receive not"; but he gave the reason: "because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures." Such selfish prayers are not true prayers. They are not drawing nigh to God (Jas. 4: 8), and therefore God does not draw nigh to the maker of them. To be sure, also, Paul says that three times he besought the Lord to remove his thorn in the flesh, and the only answer he received was Christ's grace sufficient to bear the thorn (2 Cor. 12: 8, 9); but Paul's glad testimony was that he gloried in the thorn, because it was the occasion of the coming of more of Christ's grace into his life. Understood in these ways, every real prayer is answered, and answered at once.

Answers of Good. 11, 12. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? "Bread, dried fish, and hard-boiled eggs are the peasants' common food in Palestine." — *Century Bible*. A flat stone might look like the flat loaf of bread used in Palestine; a serpent might look like a long, narrow fish; a scorpion rolled up might resemble an egg. These are all useless and dangerous, and God never gives such gifts to his children any more than an earthly father would, but only what is good, however we may misunderstand it.

Illustration. Bishop Pelham, of Norwich, was once talking with a man who laid large claims for electricity as being the greatest marvel of the age: it could send a message around the world in the twinkling of an eye. "Yes," answered the bishop, "but I read of something more amazing in a very old book this morning." "In an old book? whatever was it?" "The words," the bishop replied, "were these: 'In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.' There is a message sent all the way from earth to heaven, and an answer comes back the same day. More than that, the practical effect desired is actually produced, a thing that electricity can never accomplish." — *Condensed from Canon Aitken*.

Answers of the HIGHEST Good. 13. Christ reasons from the goodness of earthly fathers to the necessary goodness of the heavenly Father who created them. If they give good gifts to their children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? The best prayer seeks the best thing, and that is the presence of God's Holy Spirit. "To a right-minded man, some of the most astonishing passages in the Bible are the mysterious declarations and hints of the residence of the Holy Spirit in a human soul." — *Austin Phelps*. And not only is the Holy Spirit our best answer to prayer, but he, when he enters our lives, is our best guide to the method and power of prayer. "We pray because God, God the Holy Ghost, puts it into our hearts to pray, helps our infirmities, suggests to us what things we ought to pray for, and how. Look at a ship without a wind, becalmed in the middle sea, its sails flapping idly hither and thither; what a difference from the same ship when the wind has filled its sails, and it is making joyful progress to the haven whither it is bound! The breath of God, that is the wind which must fill the sails of our souls." — *Trench*.

"The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed
If thou the spirit give by which I pray:
Unless thou show to us thine own true way
No man can find it: Father! thou must lead.
Do thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind
By which such virtue may in me be bred
That in thy holy footsteps I may tread;
The fetters of my tongue do thou unbind,
That I may have the power to sing of thee.
And sound thy praises everlastingly." — *William Wordsworth*.

PRAYER AND PRAISE. The climax of prayer is praise. "Call upon me in the day of trouble," says Asaph: "I will deliver thee, *and thou shalt glorify me*" (Ps. 50: 15). "May we by our prayers ever raise ourselves more and more above ourselves until at last we pray God only for his will. The holiest spirits have always closed the story of their life of prayer by praying this only: 'Thy will be done.' God becomes for us so great, so mighty, his heart seems so full of goodness, his mind so full of wisdom, that, as we think of these, our judgment and our wishing are silenced, and we are ready to leave wholly to him whatever he wills to give. Then petition recedes and the other contents of prayer come to the front, thanksgiving, resignation, confession, sacrifice, praise, worship. And at last even the earlier of these forms are lost in the praise and in the worship: *Soli Deo gloria.*" — Prof. Friedrich Niebergall, D.D.

THE SUM OF THE DOCTRINE OF PRAYER. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God (Phil. 4: 6).

LESSON IV. — July 28.

OBEYING GOD. — Matt. 4: 18-22; John 14: 22-24; Jas. 1: 22-27.

GOLDEN TEXT. *If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.* — JOHN 14: 15.

Devotional Reading: John 15: 8-17.

Additional Material for Teachers: Deut. 10: 12, 13; 1 Sam. 15: 22, 23; Matt. 7: 21-27; Mark 3: 35.

Primary Topic: Loving God and Doing His Will.

Lesson Material: Matt. 4: 18-22; Jas. 1: 22-27.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: Obedience: to Whom? Why? How?

Additional Material: 1 Chron. 16: 15; Ps. 103: 17, 18; Eccl. 12: 13; Mic. 6: 8; Matt. 5: 19; 22: 37-40; John 15: 12-14; 1 John 2: 3-6, 17.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The subject of obedience is finely adapted to all grades of the school. The primary pupils should be taught to obey their fathers and mothers, since thus they are obeying God's command. The older pupils will be taught to obey the school authorities and to heed the ordinances of the town for the care of the streets and the like. The adults will extend the lesson to the laws of the State and nation and even to international law. All of these are expressions of the laws of God, and the central truth to be enforced in all grades is that God must be obeyed — the reasons why and the manner of the obedience. To bring out these truths the pupils will be familiarized with the Bible's greatest passages on obedience, which are brought together in our lesson.

LEARN BY HEART.

Deut. 10: 12, 13; Eccl. 12: 13; 1 John 2: 17; John 14: 15.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — Matt. 4: 18-22 was spoken at the beginning of Christ's public ministry, by the Sea of Galilee.

John 14 was spoken on the evening before Christ's crucifixion, in the upper room in Jerusalem. The Epistle of James was written from Jerusalem, by James, our Lord's brother, between A.D. 44 and A.D. 51 (Plumptre).

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Obedience: to Whom? Why? How?

I. Obedience: TO WHOM? Matt. 4: 18-22.

"Follow me."
Obedience better than sacrifice.
God's covenant.

II. Obedience: WHY? John 14: 22-24.

Because we love Christ.
Because we love God.
Because we want the love of God and Christ.
Because obedience brings prosperity.
Because obedience brings mercy.
Because obedience brings eternal life.
Because obedience is our whole duty.

III. Obedience: HOW? Jas. 1: 22-27.

Deeds, not words.
Persevering obedience.
Obedience in speech.
Obedience in kindness.
Obedience in purity.
Obedience from the heart.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Reasons for obeying God.
What other obedience is involved in obeying God?
Kinds of obedience that do not count.
Way in which to obey God.
Bible examples of obedience.
Examples of obedience in modern times.
How to cultivate the spirit of obedience.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Matthew, John, and James. *Volumes of essays* on the conduct of life, especially those by Marden, Mathews, and Smiles. *Hymns* on obedience, such as "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult," "My Jesus, as thou wilt," and "Just to trust in the Lord, just to lean on his word."

MATT. 4: 18. And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

19. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

I. OBEDIENCE: TO WHOM? Matt. 4: 18-22. "Obedience," wrote George Macdonald, "is the key to every door"; then it is certainly the key to him who is the Door, the key to the Christian life. In studying this great truth it is necessary that we first learn whom we are to obey, and the Bible leaves us in no doubt.



Jesus calls Peter and Andrew.

From an old print.

18. At the beginning of his public ministry Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw the famous brothers, Simon whom he had already named Peter in anticipation of his rock-like qualities, and Simon's brother Andrew who had first brought him to Jesus a few months before. They were following their trade of fishing, using a large net rather than a line, according to the custom of the time and place.

19. Then Jesus issued his great command, **Follow me** (R. V., "Come ye after me") and **I will make you fishers of men**. Jesus did not ask whether these men were famous and powerful, but only whether they were ready to be obedient, ready to work for him.

Illustrations. "He goes among those who are busy in the duty of the day. He found a king for Israel in a boy who was keeping sheep. He found a prophet to succeed Elijah in a young man who was ploughing in the field. He found a missionary

for India in a humble shoemaker, busy at his bench, ready for the divine call, unable ever to say No to God." — J. R. Miller.

Note that the obedience which Christ required called them to leave their work and their home and be with him. He does not always require us to do that, but we are always to be ready to do it, and our hearts are to dwell with him at all times.

Note also that Simon and Andrew were to glorify their old calling in the service of Christ, fishing for men as patiently and skilfully and bravely as they had fished for fish. So each of us is to use in Christ's service whatever ability he possesses.

20. And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him.

21. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

22. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

JOHN 14: 22. Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

20. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. The same was true of Christ's cousins, James and John, whom he found soon after and similarly summoned. They had more to leave, for they were well-to-do, but they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. Obedience, if it is real, will be prompt and instinctive. It will not stop to ask questions or consider policies. It will simply obey. "To be a Christian is to obey Christ, no matter how you feel." — *Beecher*.

Illustration. " 'Sir,' said the Duke of Wellington to an officer of engineers who urged the impossibility of executing the directions he had received, 'I did not ask your opinion. I gave you my orders, and I expect them to be obeyed.' Such should be the obedience of every follower of Jesus." — *Spurgeon*.

OBEDIENCE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. Thus Christ made obedience to him the very foundation of his kingdom. In this he was carrying on the great truths of the Old Testament. A conspicuous illustration is 1 Sam. 15: 22, 23, Samuel's answer to Saul who had pleaded his intention of sacrificing to God the cattle of the Amalekites which God had commanded him to destroy. "To obey is better than sacrifice," was Samuel's stern reply, — "the great principle which was the special message committed to every prophet in Israel, and which was repeated all through its history, side by side with the divinely appointed sacrificial system." — *Alexander MacLaren*.

1 Chron. 16: 15 puts in a striking light the obedience which God requires: "Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations." Every command of God has two sides, an order and a promise; it is a covenant as well as a command. If we obey the order we receive the promise. And there is no shifting of the terms; they last for a thousand generations.

An old sailor said to a young apprentice, "Aboard a man-o'-war, my lad, there's only two things — one's duty, t'other's mutiny." It is thus in our dealings with God.

"Tune me, O Lord, into one harmony
With thee — one full, responsive, vibrant chord." — *Rosselli*.

II. OBEDIENCE: WHY? John 14: 22-24. Though true obedience does not stop to question, there is always reason back of it. We obey instinctively, but we know why we obey, just as a soldier knows why he put himself into a situation requiring instant obedience to commands. This reason we are now to study, and we shall find a number of reasons involved.

WE OBEY BECAUSE WE LOVE CHRIST. 23. Jesus answered the question just asked him by Judas Thaddæus about the special relation between Christ and his disciples, and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words. See also the golden text. Judas had spoken of Christ's exclusive manifestation to his disciples, but Christ answered with "a man, *any* man." In effect he said, "What I offer to you is open to all who believe, love, and obey. The gate which I throw open shall stand wide for all who choose to enter." — *F. B. Meyer*. Entrance is conditioned only upon love to Christ.

Illustration. "Two gentlemen once stopped to speak to a little crossing-sweeper, ragged, and blue with cold. After giving him some money, one of them said, 'I hope, my boy, you love the Lord Jesus.' 'Indeed, I do, sir,' heartily replied the boy, a smile lighting up his sunken eyes. 'How do you know that you do?' asked the second gentleman, curious to know what answer the boy would make to a question which troubles so many older heads and hearts. 'Cause I always do what he tells me,' was the hearty response; and the gentleman stood silent beside him." — *Mrs. E. Poole*.

24. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

WE OBEY BECAUSE WE LOVE GOD. 24. The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which (R. V., "who") sent me. Christ is never tired of emphasizing his oneness with the Father. His words are God's words. His commands are issued by the Most High. If we love him and wish to obey him, we love God and seek to obey God. Whether we hear the Father's commands in the Old Testament or the Son's in the New Testament, it is all one.

Illustration. "A teacher, explaining to her class the meaning of the words about God's angels, 'ministers of his who do his pleasure,' asked, 'How do the angels carry out God's will?' One child said, 'They do it at once.' That was good. Another said, 'They do it well.' That also was a good reply. A third said, 'They do it with all their heart.' That was better still. And after a pause a bright little girl said, 'They do it without asking any questions.' That was best of all." — *Learmount.*

WE OBEY BECAUSE WE WANT THE LOVE OF GOD AND CHRIST. 23. If a man loves and obeys God, Christ's word is, **My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.** The same thought is wonderfully brought out in John 15: 8-17. In Mark 3: 35 Christ puts it very vividly: "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." "There is no other blessing that we need half so constantly as the blessing of his abiding presence. We may be willing to say 'Come' to many acquaintances because we dare also to say 'Go.' When we once say 'Come' to Jesus it means, 'Come to stay!'" — *Foulkes.*

Illustration. "Travellers among the Alps tell us that they come to have a peculiar feeling, unlike any other, for their Alpine guide. Not a feeling of companionship, fellowship, or friendship alone, but a combination of all three. This feeling, they say, is produced by their obedience to the guide's commands, and the men who have guided them through the Alps always seem to them different from other men." — *Sunday-School Chronicle.* The same nearness to Christ and God is produced by obedience.

WE OBEY BECAUSE OBEDIENCE BRINGS PROSPERITY. Christ illustrated this truth by the beautiful parable of the two foundations — the house built in the summer on the dry sandy bottom of a mountain torrent, swept away when the storms came in the autumn; and the house built on the rocky shore, which the torrent could not touch. The latter, said Christ, is like a wise man who hears my sayings and does them; the former is like a foolish, disobedient hearer.

David illustrated the same truth in the First Psalm, comparing the man whose "delight is in the law of Jehovah" to a well-watered, flourishing, fruit-bearing tree: "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

"There is no record of a man getting a blessing from Christ when he was on earth who didn't get it in the act of obedience." — *D. L. Moody.* (Illustrated by the man cured of the palsy, the blind man sent to the Pool of Siloam, the man with the withered hand, and the ten lepers.)

"Son of heaven and earth,
Attend! That thou art happy, owe to God,
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand." — *Milton.*

BECAUSE OBEDIENCE BRINGS MERCY. "The mercy [Amer. version, "loving-kindness"] of the Lord," David sung in Ps. 103: 17, 18, "is from everlasting to



Houses on the Rock and the Sand.

JAS. 1: 22. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

everlasting . . . to those that remember his commandments to do them." How, indeed, can God forgive our sins if we keep on in the path of disobedience?

"Never, by lapse of time
The soul defaced by crime
Into its former self returns again;
Yet, if we will our Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way,
Shall issue out in heavenly day." — *Trench.*

BECAUSE OBEDIENCE BRINGS ETERNAL LIFE. This is the testimony of the beloved disciple: "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2: 17). "There is no higher aim than to do the will of God. Human lives climb from the lowlands to the upland heights just in proportion as they do the will of God on earth as it is in heaven." — *F. B. Meyer*. Some one asked a successful Christian worker, as he lay dying, what was the secret of his life. He answered, "I have said Yes to Christ."

"I said, 'Let me walk in the field.'
He said, 'No, walk in the town.'
I said, 'There are no flowers there.'
He said, 'No flowers, but a crown.'

"I pleaded for time to be given.
He said, 'Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in heaven
To have followed the steps of your Guide.'" — *George Macdonald*.

BECAUSE OBEDIENCE IS OUR WHOLE DUTY. "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12: 13). "The maximum achievement of any man's life is to have done the will of God. No man or woman can do any more with a life; no Luther, no Spurgeon, no Wesley, no Melancthon, can have done any more with their lives, and a dairymaid or a scavenger can do as much. Therefore the supreme principle upon which we have to run our lives is to adhere, through good report and ill, through temptation and prosperity and adversity, to the will of God, wherever that may lead us." — *Henry Drummond*.

Illustrations. Florence Nightingale once said of her great work, "If I could tell you all, you would see how God has done all, and I nothing. I have worked hard, very hard, that is all; and I have never refused God anything."

The Roman Pharnaces sent Cæsar a present of a diadem while he was still rebelling against his power. Cæsar sent back his present, saying, "First of all yield obedience, and then make presents." God will be pleased at nothing in us till we have yielded him obedient hearts.

III. OBEDIENCE: HOW? Jas. 1: 22-27. James, our Lord's brother, wrote a most practical letter to the Jewish Christians scattered abroad, and of course he included some advice on this most practical of all topics, how to obey God. Our verses are the heart of what he says on this subject.

DEEDS, NOT WORDS. Vs. 22-24. James urged that those who merely listen to God's commands and do not do them are self-deceivers. "Hearing without doing is as trivial and fruitless as a casual glance at one's self in a looking-glass; blessing only follows active obedience." — *New Century Bible*.

Another apostle, John the beloved, says the same thing in even more vigorous words (1 John 2: 3-6): "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar." That is plain speaking, but not too plain.

Our Lord himself had terrible words for those that called him "Lord, Lord," but did not do God's will. He declared that in the Last Judgment he would impose upon such hypocrites this awful sentence: "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7: 21-23).

"The words of Jesus in the mind of a disobedient man are no more vital than wheat in the wrappings of a mummy." — *Maltbie D. Babcock*.

25. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

26. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

Illustrations. " 'I love you, mother,' said a little girl, as she slipped her arms about her mother's neck and gave her an affectionate hug. 'But do you love me all the time?' the mother asked. 'Surely you did not love me this afternoon, when I asked you to run an errand for me, and you were not willing to leave your play long enough to do what I wanted you to do.' Then the child hid her face upon her mother's shoulder."

In the ancient cathedral of Lubeck, in Germany, there is an old slab with the following inscription:

"Thus speaketh Christ, our Lord, to us:
Ye call me Master, and obey me not;
Ye call me Light, and see me not;
Ye call me Way, and walk me not;
Ye call me Life, and desire me not;
Ye call me Wise, and follow me not;
Ye call me Fair, and love me not;
Ye call me Rich, and ask me not;
Ye call me Eternal, and seek me not;
Ye call me Gracious, and trust me not;
Ye call me Noble, and serve me not;
Ye call me Mighty, and honor me not;
Ye call me Just, and fear me not;
If I condemn you, blame me not."

PERSEVERING OBEDIENCE. 25. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. This verse "brings together the beginning and the end of the Sermon on the Mount." — *Cambridge Bible*.

Persevering obedience means the giving up of whatever God disapproves. "The moment our lives are laid down in uncompromising obedience to him, they are laid down in utter and uncompromising contrariety with the things he has told us we are not to love." — *Robert E. Speer*.

Persevering obedience trusts God's commands, knowing that they are always kind. "You are afraid God will ask some hard thing or some absurd thing from you. But God's will is the sweetest, best thing in all the world." — *R. A. Torrey*.

As we pursue the course of persevering obedience we learn more about God, and obedience becomes ever easier. "Obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge." — *F. W. Robertson*. "When the soul seeks the kingdom by obeying the King, the soul discovers the Father, and discovering the Father obeys more readily, and obeying more readily, has a larger revelation which makes obedience easy and the horizon greater." — *G. Campbell Morgan*.

OBEDIENCE IN SPEECH. 26. If any man among you seem to be (R. V., "thinketh himself to be") religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. "He who hath no bridle on his tongue hath no grace in his heart." — *St. Jerome*. Speech is our great instrument of obedience. For once we can obey with our hands or feet, we can obey ten times with our tongues. This is because speech is the common bridge between our lives and the lives of others. Christ also coupled speech with obedience when he said (Matt. 5: 19): "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Every sentence we speak teaches something good or something evil, if not by the words, then by the manner in which they are spoken.

"The careless word, let fall to-day, may yield
Years hence, to thee a harvest full of fears." — *From the Swedish*.

"Five things observe with care:
Of whom you speak,
To whom you speak,
And how, and when, and where."

OBEDIENCE IN KINDNESS. 27. Pure religion and undefiled ("The term seems chosen with special reference to the Pharisee's scrupulous care to avoid anything

27. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

that caused ceremonial defilement." — (*Cambridge Bible*) before God and the Father (R. V., "before our God and Father"). "Father" is in special point here because James is going on to urge care for God's poor children, the orphans. Is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. "Visit" implies caring for. The early church took special thought for these unfortunates (Acts 6: 1), and so should every church.

Our Lord used a term still wider than "fatherless and widows." In a glorious utterance (Matt. 22: 37-40) he summed up all the commandments as included in two, love to God and love to one's neighbor.

Similarly, in one of the crowning verses of the Old Testament (Mic. 6: 8) the prophet defines religion much as James defines it: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

"Every kindness done to others is a step nearer to the life of Christ." — *Dean Stanley*. "Have you ever thought, in that epitome that Paul gives of Christ's life, 'who went about doing good' (Acts 10: 38), how simple and homely is the picture given? He had time to talk with the man who called in to see him in the evening. He stopped in the temple to see the man that was bedridden there in the porch. He did not shrink from lepers that met him as he walked along the way. He saw the man who climbed up in a tree and looked down over the crowd. Mary who sat at his feet, and Martha who cooked the dinner, both got their word from him. The woman at the well found him willing to talk with her. As we look at the life of our Lord, at his public life, we find it too, as well as his private life, was filled with quiet ministry to individuals. Is there any other teacher like him?" — *Mrs. Montgomery*.

OBEEDIENCE IN PURITY. And to keep himself unspotted from the world. James means the world that is "apart from and opposed to Christ, the sphere in which life is purely selfish." — *New Century Bible*. The "undefiled" religion is to be "unspotted" with selfishness. The "pure" religion is to be undefiled with worldly greed. How many can stand this test of purity? The Christian, of course, must not be immersed in worldliness; but he must not even be spotted with it, he must be free from it altogether, as free as Christ was when Satan offered him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and he rejected them with scorn. Obedience to God involves this whole hearted purity of purpose and ambition, this consecration of all we have and are to the will of God and the work of Christ.

OBEEDIENCE FROM THE HEART. This great theme of obedience to God is finely summed up in Deut. 10: 12, 13:

"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, and to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?"

This looks like a fearfully hard requirement: fear and love, walking and serving, heart and soul, commandments and statutes! But it is all summed up in the phrase, "with all thy heart." If our heart is in our obedience, it will not be hard. We shall not think of the law but of the privilege, not of the commands but of the love.

Illustration. "George Bowen was a classical scholar of distinction, and was at home in four of the principal languages of Europe. He was, besides, a fine musician. In his early manhood Bowen was a philosophic skeptic and a rank pessimist. At last, however, there came to him a great experience, which made him feel the need, and ultimately see the truth, of immortality. From that point he was led on, until one night he sat down and wrote these words: 'If there is One above all who notices the desires of men, I wish he would take note of the fact that if it please him to make known his will concerning me I should think it the highest privilege to do that will wherever it might be and whatever it might involve.' It was a cry out of darkness, and not long after that Jesus Christ came to George Bowen. There soon grew up in him a new sense of obligation to humanity. He was led to leave wealth for poverty, to turn from the society of the cultured and friendly that he might care for the needs of the ignorant and prejudiced, to renounce a luxurious home for a mud-walled hut. He went to India, and for forty years, without one single change, he dwelt among

the people of that land. Persecution, epidemic, the fierce, enervating heat, could not drive him away from the crowded streets of Bombay." — *Presbyterian Adult Bible Class*.

"Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
Of our life's wild, restless sea;
Day by day his sweet voice soundeth,
Saying, 'Christian, follow me.'

"Jesus calls us from the worship
Of the vain world's golden store;
From each idol that would keep us,
Saying, 'Christian, love me more.'

"Jesus calls us: by thy mercies,
Saviour, make us hear thy call,
Give our hearts to thine obedience,
Serve and love thee best of all." — *Cecil F. Alexander*.

LESSON V. — August 4.

GROWING STRONGER. — Luke 2:42-52; 2 Peter 1:5-8.

(May be used with temperance applications.)

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The path of the righteous is as the dawning light, That shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* — PROVERBS 4:18.

Devotional Reading: Eph. 6:10-18.

Additional Material for Teachers: Deut. 33:25; Ps. 18:35, 36; Mark 4:26, 27; Acts 20:32; 2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 6:10-18; Col. 1:9-11.

Primary Lesson Material: Luke 2:42-52.

Memory Verse: Jehovah will give strength unto his people. — Ps. 29:11.

Junior Memory Verse: 2 Pet. 3:18.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: The Kinds of Strength We Need: Getting It; Using It.

Additional Material: Job 17:9; Prov. 4:18, 23; Isa. 40:29-31; 2 Cor. 12:9; Eph. 3:14-21; Phil. 4:8, 13.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Primary teachers will naturally make much of the story of Jesus in the temple, emphasizing Christ's obedience to his parents and his love for the church. Intermediate teachers will emphasize the matter of growth, in which pupils of that age are especially interested, and will seek to show them the great importance of spiritual growth along with the mental and physical. Adult classes will discuss the need of strong Christians in society, in business, in politics, in the church and the home. Temperance applications will be made freely in all grades.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — Jesus in the temple at Jerusalem, in the twelfth year of his age, the spring of A.D. 8, at the passover. Peter's second Epistle was probably written soon after his first letter, and toward the end of his life, perhaps from the city then called Babylon.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How Christ Grew Strong and How We May Grow Strong.

I. HOW CHRIST GREW STRONG, Luke 2:42-52.

Strength from the church.
Strength from home.

II. HOW WE MAY GROW STRONG, 2 Pet. 1:5-7.

Gospel addition.
The gospel armor.
Strength depends on God, Christ, the Holy Spirit.
Strength from the Book.
Gradual growth.
Constant growth.
Unconscious growth.
Strength renewed.
Strength based on purity.
Strength based on temperance.

III. HOW WE MAY USE OUR STRENGTH, 2 Pet. 1:8.

A fruitful Christian.
"Every good work."
The temperance reform.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The origin of strength.
 Strong Bible men.
 Strong Bible women.
 Gospel addition.
 Gospel armor.
 How to get strength.
 How to use strength.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Luke and Second Peter. Blaikie's *How to Get Strong* for illustrations on the physical side.

Hughes's *The Manliness of Christ* for illustrations on the spiritual side; also Barton's *The Young Man's Jesus*. Goethe's "Purer yet and purer," and other poems and hymns of growth and progress. A recent complete, sprightly, and very effective summary of temperance arguments and scientific proof is "*Alcohol, Its Influence on Mind and Body*," by Edwin F. Bowers.

LEARN BY HEART.

2 Pet. 1:5-7; Ps. 29:11; 2 Pet. 3:18.

LUKE 2:42. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

43. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

I. HOW CHRIST GREW STRONG, Luke 2:42-52. We do not often associate the thought of growth with the thought of Christ. We think of him as always equally strong, equally wise, equally conscious of his union with the Father. But Luke gives us a precious glimpse of his growing time, the boyhood period when, in conformity to his human estate, he matured physically, mentally, and spiritually as an example for all other boys and girls. And in this unique incident we see the divine child gaining his strength from two sources that are equally open to the boys and girls, the men and women, of to-day: the church and the home.

STRENGTH FROM THE CHURCH, Luke 2:42-49. Mary and Joseph were accustomed to journey to Jerusalem every year, to celebrate the passover in the holy city. Only men were required by the law to make this pious pilgrimage, but the great rabbi Hillel had extended the privilege to women. At

the age of twelve "a Jew was required to keep the ordinances of his religion. He was now called a 'son of the law.'" — *New Century Bible*. When he reached this age, therefore, Jesus travelled with his parents from Nazareth to Jerusalem, and a journey full of wonder and delight it must have been to him. Mary and Joseph trusted the boy so



Caravan journeying to Jerusalem for the Passover.

47. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

thoroughly, and had so much confidence in his manly resources, that they left him largely to his own devices in the great city, crowded with a million pilgrims. Indeed, they had gone a day's journey on the return before they discovered that the lad was not in the Nazareth caravan; and, hastily returning, they spent the next day in a vain search, and it was not till the third day that they found their son in the place where they might well have looked for him at first, in one of the beautiful porticos of the temple, where the learned rabbis sat teaching their pupils. Jesus was among these pupils, and was amazing the rabbis by the pertinence of his questions, and by the understanding he showed when they in turn questioned him. Jesus was surprised at Mary's reproaches, for he had not, in his absorption, known that his relatives had left the city. "Wist ye not," he asked, "that I must be in my Father's house?" (R. V.)

The church is God's agency for helping men through other men. "The world knows nothing about God except what Christ revealed, and the world can never know Christ except through his followers." — *Bishop Thoburn*. These people of God are to be found where Christ found them, in the church. "If a man chooses to struggle on alone, he can do so. In that event, however, let him not complain if the issue is against him." — *David James Burrell, D.D.* The wise man will get all the help he can for his life, and he will find it in the church.

Illustrations. A minister called upon a member who had been neglecting the church prayer meeting, and went straight up to the fireplace in the sitting-room and with the tongs removed a live coal from the fire and placed it on the hearth, then watched it while it turned from the red glow of heat to a black mass. The careless church member observed the proceeding and then said, "You need not say a single word, sir; I'll be there on Wednesday night."

No one can get much strength from the church without attending the church services. One winter day in Kentucky a gentleman, riding on horseback, met an old negro plodding through the deep snow to the church which was four miles from his home. "Why, uncle!" said the gentleman, "you ought not to go so far on such a day as this." "Ah, massa," was the answer, "I darn't stay home; 'cause you see, I dunno when de blessing gwine to come; an' s'pose it ud come this very mornin' an' I away!" That old slave had the spirit of Jesus, who felt that he must be in his Father's house.

In the old English churches, as well as in Puritan days in America,

it was the custom for a church officer to go about the church during the sermon with a long wand, with which he wakened all whom he saw asleep. Sometimes the wand had a fox's brush at one end to tickle the ladies into wakefulness, and a more forcible knob on the other end for the men! There will be no sleeping in church if we have in our hearts the eagerness for divine truth which the boy Jesus had.

STRENGTH FROM HOME, Luke 2:50-52. Already, at the very beginning of Christ's life, and in the case of those who should have understood it best, there is



Nazareth.

50. And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

recorded the sad statement that is true of his relations with most men through all his ministry: **They understood not the saying which he spake unto them.** The great truth of Christ's deity had not yet entered the hearts of Mary and Joseph and Christ's brothers and sisters. They could hardly be expected to understand that truth so early, but it is plain that they did not sympathize with the lad's ideals and his pure desires. If our Saviour was thus misunderstood by those nearest and dearest, should any of us complain when we also are misunderstood?

51. **He went down with them** (from the heights of Jerusalem), **and came to Nazareth.** This obscure and despised village was well fitted for the growth of the child Jesus because of "(1) its *seclusion*. It lies in a narrow cleft in the limestone hills which form the boundary of Zabulon entirely out of the ordinary roads of commerce, so that none could say that our Lord had learned either from Gentiles or from Rabbis. (2) Its *beauty and peacefulness*. The flowers of Nazareth are famous, and the appearance of its inhabitants shows its healthfulness. It was a home of humble peace and plenty. The fields of its green valley are fruitful, and the view from the hill which overshadows it is one of the loveliest and most historically striking in all Palestine." — *Cambridge Bible*. We also may grow in small villages and

obscure homes as well as in great cities and magnificent dwellings. **And was subject unto them.** Obedience is the first condition of mental and spiritual growth. Mary and Joseph had just shown themselves far inferior to the twelve-year-old boy in their apprehension of the deep things of God; but they had, nevertheless, a right to his loyal obedience, and he gave it gladly and lovingly. He helped his mother, in her housework, and we know that he served under Joseph in the shop and became a carpenter. We may be sure that he was a good carpenter, that his saw cut straight, his nails were driven true, and that all his work was exact, beautiful, and enduring. Too many boys form a distaste for their father's occupation; usually it furnishes them their very best opening for their own development under loving and experienced guidance and for an advantageous start in life. **But his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.** That was *her* mode of growth, and she was a wise woman to take advantage of it. We also, like Mary, will find our best growth through meditation on the sayings of Jesus. Joseph here disappears from the Gospels, and the tradition that he died before Jesus' public ministry began is doubtless correct.

52. **And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.** Christ's physical growth was important; health and strength are the royal foundations of an effective life, and our Lord could not have endured what he had to endure without a superb physique. But a strong body is worse than useless without wisdom,



From the painting exhibited in the Church at Nazareth.

The Carpenter's Son.

2 PET. 1:5. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6. And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

so that this is placed first. Christ's growth in favor with God and man was an inevitable result of his growth in wisdom.

CHILDREN IN THE HOME. Few boys and girls understand how great is their power to make a home beautiful and noble. Well said "Billy" Sunday, in a sermon preached in Philadelphia before 20,000 people: "You can build your palaces; you can amass your fortunes; you can spread Persian rugs on your floors; you can sit beneath the flash of the candelabra; you can push a button and have a retinue of servants doing a marathon to see which will be honored by waiting on you; you can roll down the streets in the most magnificent and faultless equipages; but I say to you, nothing can make happy the father and mother of a godless drunken loafer of a boy, or a frivolous, coquettish, flirty, good-for-nothing, empty-headed sort of girl that gads the street with every Tom, Dick, and Harry, and makes you hang your head with shame and disgrace that you ever gave her birth."

Illustration. An old woman strayed into a woman's missionary convention and was soon deeply interested. She was queerly dressed and evidently ignorant of the great subject of missions, but she drank in the whole of a long session. At the close the leader expressed the hope that they might all work more earnestly for "the bringing in of the kingdom." Quickly the old woman rose in her place and said simply, "I'm goin' to try mighty hard to bring it fur's our house." That is the idea of helpful home life; and every one, old or young, who does his best to make his home a section of the kingdom of God will in the striving gain the best growth of which he is capable.

"We give thee thanks, O Lord!
Not for the palaces that wealth has grown,
Where ease is worshipped, duty dimly known,
And pleasure leads her dance the flowery way;
But for the quiet homes where love is queen,
And life is more than baubles touched and seen,
And old folks bless us, and dear children play;
For these, O Lord, our thanks!" — *Robert Bridges.*

II. HOW WE MAY GROW STRONG, 2 Pet. 1:5-7. We have here Peter's splendid list of Christian qualities, arranged in the order in which the Christian may expect to grow into them — the "Gospel Addition," a glorious stairway of spiritual progress. The passage is clearest in the revised version, used below.

5. For this very cause. Namely, since we have been allowed to become "part-takers of the divine nature" (v. 4). **Adding on your part all diligence.** God has done his part toward our salvation; now it remains for us to do ours, and most earnestly. **In your faith** (faith in Christ) **supply virtue.** It is as if faith were the soil in which virtue is to be raised. Peter (2 Pet. 1:1) is writing to those who have that faith, so that he can take it for granted as the foundation of Christian growth. Virtue is the active "works" without which all faith is dead. We are to have such faith in Christ that men may see our good works and glorify — not us, but our Father in heaven. **And in your virtue knowledge,** the practical knowledge of right and wrong which we are to gain from the practice of virtue.

6. And in your knowledge temperance. The Greek means self-control, the sway of the soul over temptations from within. **And in your temperance patience.** The Greek word means endurance, the soul's conquest over all that attacks it from without. Inward self-control is the soil in which to grow the endurance of outward assaults. **And in your patience godliness;** that is, the worship of God, which the Greek word means rather than Godlikeness.

TEMPERANCE, THE SOIL OF ENDURANCE. It has been proved in Germany, by patient, thorough, and convincing scientific experiments, that alcohol even in small amounts lessens muscular and nervous endurance, diminishes accuracy, makes a worker in every respect a poorer worker. Total abstinence is necessary if a worker would be at his best. And it must be continuous. Railroads used to forbid their workers to drink when on duty; now they realize that any drinking unfits men for responsible work. "No spasmodic, occasional, and partial abstinence will ever bring a man victorious to the goal. Temperance must be continuous." — *Prof. Marcus Dods.*

7. And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

8. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Illustration. "I drink to make me work," said a young man. An old man replied, "That is right: thee drink and it will make thee work! I was once a very prosperous farmer—I had a good loving wife and two as fine lads as ever the sun shone on. We had a comfortable home and lived very happily together. But we used to drink ale to make us work. Those two lads I have laid in drunkards' graves. My wife died broken-hearted. I am seventy-two years old, and had it not been for drink I might have been an independent gentleman; but I drank to make me work, and, mark you, it makes me work now. At seventy-two years of age it makes me work for my daily bread." — *Young People's Weekly*.

7. And in your godliness love of the brethren. The Christians were drawn together by their common worship of God. And in your love of the brethren love. In Peter as well as in Paul love is the climax of all the virtues. "In this list of the fruits of faith we have first the active gifts, virtue and knowledge; then the passive qualities of self-control and endurance; then the attitude towards God, godliness, towards the church, love of the brethren, and finally towards God and all mankind, love." — *Cambridge Bible*.

HELP FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS. *The Gospel Armor.* Peter's Gospel Addition is paralleled by Paul's list of the Gospel Armor (Eph. 6:10-18): the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit (the word of God), and the weapon of all-prayer. These seven complete the outfit of the full-grown Christian. We have not grown into "the stature of Christ" till we have put on all of them; for he wore them all, and hands them all down to us.

Dependence on God. David knew well that all his growth in wisdom and power came from God. "Thy gentleness hath made me great" he beautifully wrote (Ps. 18:35); and "Thou hast enlarged my steps under me" (Ps. 18:36). "The Lord," he wrote, "will give strength unto his people" (Ps. 29:11), and no one can ever grow strong except as God helps him.

Dependence on Christ. God's power for our growth is brought to us by Christ. Peter emphasizes this truth in the last verse of this, his second Epistle: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"; and Paul felt deeply that all his power came from the same source, for he wrote (Phil. 4:13): "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." The Christian who would grow stronger day by day must day by day draw nearer to Jesus Christ by earnest prayer, eager study of his words, and honest obedience to his commands.

Dependence on the Holy Spirit. Paul states clearly for us (Eph. 3:16) the third element in our growth, that we are to be "strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man." This blessed Holy Spirit, whom the Father sends to teach us the things of Christ, can alone fill our lives with the fruits of the Spirit, and develop us into "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Thus we have three great teachers of Gospel Addition.

Strength from God's Word. When Paul parted from the beloved leaders of his church in Ephesus he said, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up" (Acts 20:32). Truly the experience of all Bible-lovers proves that the Scriptures build up. Bible study builds up the mind; the Bible is the literature of a great race, the precious heritage of the world's greatest thinkers on religious themes. It contains the loftiest philosophy, the deepest morality, the noblest sociology. No other literature, not even those of Greece and England, compares with the Bible as food for the intellect. But the Bible, while building up the mind, builds up also the soul, and that is its supreme glory. It not only convinces, it convicts and inspires. It makes men better as well as wiser, and thereby it makes them truly strong.

Gradual Growth. The growing Christian must be patient, and not expect to become full-grown in a day. Our golden text is for him: his progress will be "as the dawning light, that shineth more and more" (Prov. 4:18), rather than like the flashlight or the rocket, blazing astonishingly for a few seconds and then lapsing into darkness. If a Christian grows just a little stronger every day, with no back-sliding into weakness and sin, he may well be satisfied.

Constant Growth. Though the Christian's growth is to be gradual and slow, requiring patience, yet it is continual and permanent, inspiring confidence. One of the most comforting sentences in the Bible is Deut. 33:25: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Strength enough to last our life out—that is all we can desire. That means power adequate to all the tasks that God will send us.

Unconscious Growth. Christ compared the growth of the kingdom of God, in the world or in the individual Christian, to the quiet, unnoted growth of a seed cast upon the soil (Mark 4:26, 27). Our hearts are the soil, the seed is the Bible, the sermons we hear, prayer-meeting testimonies, good books and periodicals, and above all the voice of God speaking in our consciences. All of these build us up into Christian goodness and power without our realizing that they are at work, and if we are wise we will place ourselves under their influence as much as possible.

Strength Renewed. The growing Christian makes many mistakes, fails often, falls back when he has high hopes of progress. But our loving Father has made provision for his children's weaknesses. "To him that hath no might he increaseth strength. . . . They that wait on Jehovah shall renew their strength" (Isa. 40:29-31). God is never nearer than when we need him most. Indeed, Paul wrote that Christ's "power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9) in the human weakness that calls upon it and leans upon it; and so Paul gloried in his weakness, since it summoned the power of Christ, and declared exultantly, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

"I steadier step when I recall
That, if I slip, thou dost not fall." — *Clough.*

Strength Based on Purity. "Out of the heart," says the proverb, "are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23), and spiritual growth is a matter of the affections and the will far more than of the intellect. Purity and nobility of character mean strength in an ever-increasing amount. Most truly said Job, "He that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger" (Job 17:9). The way to have a pure heart is continually to fill the mind with pure thoughts; they will crowd out the impure ones. That is why Paul urged the Philippians to think on "whatsoever things are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, of good report" (Phil. 4:8). If we want to be strong, we can have no better rule than that.

Strength Based on Temperance. "Few parts of early education are so important as to learn to keep the body in subjection." — *Prof. William G. Blaikie.* Strength is based on temperance in all things, in eating, sleeping, playing, even working, as well as total abstinence in the use of alcohol. In the midst of modern temptations the last named is by far the most important to insist upon.

Illustration. During the great war in Europe, Russia, England, France, and Germany found it necessary to adopt severe temperance measures. An illustration is the following poster which was set up in the British military camps, both in England and on the Continent. It was entitled "Effects of Alcohol on Naval and Military Work," and read: "To all men serving the Empire: It has been proved by the most careful scientific experiments, and completely confirmed by actual experience in athletics and war, as attested by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C., K.G., K.P., Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley, K.P., G.C.B., and many other army leaders, that alcohol or drink (1) slows the power to see signals, (2) confuses prompt judgment, (3) spoils accurate shooting, (4) hastens fatigue, (5) lessens resistance to disease and exposure, (6) increases shock from wounds. We therefore most strongly urge you, for your own health and efficiency, that as long as the war lasts you should become total abstainers." And, the poster might have added, if that is good for war, it is equally good for the warfare of life.

III. HOW WE MAY USE OUR STRENGTH. 2 Pet. 1:8. Peter was a very practical apostle, and he would never stop with his list of Christian virtues without suggesting the use of them in active service. For if these things (the Christian virtues and graces just named) are yours and abound (better, "multiply," increase; Peter would have us pass from addition to multiplication!), they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful. The growing Christian will work, and his work will be successful, will bear fruit. Unto (the high result of it all) the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Greek word here translated "knowledge" is a far loftier word than the word translated "knowledge" in verse 5. It means the complete knowledge that is born of loving communion, Christ dwelling in the Christian and he in Christ.

"EVERY GOOD WORK." Paul was as practical and energetic as Peter, and this aspect of truth appealed to him also. Writing to the Corinthian Christians (2 Cor.

9:8) he said, "God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye . . . may abound unto every good work." He said the same thing, in almost the same words, to the Christians of Colossæ (Col. 1:9-11), and he would say it to us. As we grow in strength of any kind, it is in order that we may use it in loving, helpful, heroic service of others and of the world.

OUR STRENGTH FOR THE TEMPERANCE REFORM. It has been well said, "Drinking makes thinking impossible; some day thinking will make drinking impossible." But action must be added to thinking, voting to praying. We must be out and out for prohibition. A Frenchman, on seeing an Englishman wearing a blue ribbon, asked for an explanation; and when he learned that it meant that the wearer stood for temperance, he is said to have sneered: "You English are strange people. Why, if I wore a different ribbon for every vice I do not practise, you would not see my coat for the ribbons." The blue ribbon, however, is like a battle flag, a token of allegiance to the right side in the most vital of modern wars. Let all who believe in temperance show their colors, stand together, and press onward, and the war will be won.

Illustration. A young soldier got his Victoria Cross for bravery in the great European war. Slightly wounded, he came home. His friends subscribed for 120 pints of beer for him to have, to honor his return. He began to drink it, and was nearly dead when the constable found him. That welcome came near doing what all the shots of the enemy could not accomplish. It is useless to pray for our boys while we allow the saloon to spread its net of temptation around them. Down with the saloon!

LESSON VI. — August 11.

HELPING OTHERS. — Luke 10:25-37; Galatians 6:1-10.

PRINT Luke 10:30-37; Gal. 6:1, 2, 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.* GAL. 6:2.

Devotional Reading: Gal. 5:25-6:10.

Additional Material for Teachers: Lev. 19:18, 34; Deut. 22:1-4; Prov. 12:25; Matt. 10:42; Rom. 15:1-3.

Primary Lesson Material: Luke 10:25-37.

Primary Memory Verse: Be ye kind one to another. — Eph. 4:32.

Junior Memory Verses: Matt. 22:37-39.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: Who Needs Our Help, and How Can We Best Give It?

Additional Material: Prov. 17:17; Matt. 5:42; Rom. 12:10, 15; 1 Cor. 10:24; 13:1-13; Phil. 2:4; 1 John 3:16-18.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Primary and junior teachers will emphasize the parable of the good Samaritan, but will introduce a few verses from the rest of the Bible. Intermediate and senior teachers will set their pupils to collecting verses on helpfulness from all the Bible and illustrating the subject from their daily observations. Adult classes will have an opportunity to discuss social and organized helpfulness on the largest scale.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — The parable of the good Samaritan was spoken during

Christ's Peræan ministry, after the return of the Seventy. Galatians was written by Paul perhaps from Corinth during the winter of A.D. 57-58. "The subscription in the Authorized Version, according to which it was 'written from Rome,' rests on no early manuscript authority, and is certainly wrong." — *Cambridge Bible.*

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Who are our neighbors?
The Christian measure of giving.
How to bear others' burdens.
Paul's summary of helpfulness.
Christ a model of helpfulness.
Helpful men and women of the Bible.

LEARN BY HEART.

Gal. 6: 2; Eph. 4: 32; Rom. 15: 3;
1 John 3: 16.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Who Needs Our Help, and
How Can We Best Give It?

I. CHRIST'S SEVEN RULES OF HELPFULNESS, Luke 10: 25-37.

1. Help with love.
2. Help the needy.
3. Help with compassion.
4. Help with healing.
5. Help with self-sacrifice.
6. Help with money.
7. Go and do likewise.

II. PAUL'S SEVEN RULES OF HELPFULNESS, Gal. 6: 1-10.

1. Help in humility.
2. Bear others' burdens.
3. Bear your own burdens.

4. Help teachers.
5. The rewards of helpfulness.
6. Unwearied helpfulness.
7. Help all, especially Christians.

III. OTHER BIBLE HINTS ON HELPFULNESS.

1. Help by kindly speech.
2. Help in little ways.
3. Help in times of trouble.
4. Help by honoring others.
5. Help by rejoicing and weeping with others.
6. Christ our Model of Helpfulness.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Luke and Galatians. *Biographies* of helpful characters, such as Florence Nightingale, Fidelity Fiske, Alice Freeman Palmer, Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, Howard, Lincoln. *A Man's Christian*, by Duncan. Many hymns and poems, such as Burton's "Pass It On" and van Dyke's "Hymn of the Helpers."

I. CHRIST'S SEVEN RULES OF HELPFULNESS. Luke 10: 25-37. Christ had left Galilee for the last time, and was in Peræa, the land east of the Jordan. He had sent forth the seventy disciples, and had welcomed them as they returned with good tidings. At that time or soon after a **certain lawyer**, or scribe, whose business was the interpretation of the Mosaic law, tempted Jesus, trying to entrap him in some spoken error. His question, **What shall I do to inherit eternal life?** sprung from the knowledge of immortality given by the Old Testament. Christ filled the words, "eternal life," with a richer meaning than the scribe imagined. Christ turned on the lawyer, saying, in effect, "Your whole business is to teach people the answer to that question out of the law. What answer do you find there?" The scribe answered glibly enough with the summary of the law given in Deut. 6: 5; 11: 13; Lev. 19: 18, a summary which, written on slips of vellum called phylacteries, was worn by Jews on their arms or foreheads. Eternal life is to be won by love — whole-hearted love of God, and love of one's neighbor as one's self.

CHRIST'S FIRST RULE. In assenting to this, Christ laid down the first rule of helpfulness: *Help by love; love thy neighbor as thyself.* There can be no real helpfulness without love. "Only love can strengthen the will, clarify the vision, lead us to read aright the heart of a friend. Only love can create the cheerful, the wise, the understanding giver." — *Kate Douglas Wiggin.*

Illustration. Arnold Bennett, in one of his novels, describes how Edwin Clayhanger, a strong young man, had it for his nightly task to help upstairs his decrepit father to his sleeping-room, and he had become very weary of the duty. The son did not dream that one night the very last time had come, and he was irritated by the slow, heavy, tottering progress of the invalid.

"Edwin restrained his exasperation, but though he said nothing, his sharp, half-vicious pull on the arm seemed to exclaim, 'Confound you! Come up with you!'"

"I shall never go down these stairs again," panted the old man.

"Nonsense!" snapped the son.

"Afterward Edwin thought with a lancinating pain of what his father had mumbled. Edwin would have given much of his pride to be able to go back and help the old man upstairs once more, and do it with a more loving patience."

That son helped with his arm but not with his heart, and so he did not really help at all.

CHRIST'S SECOND RULE: *Help the needy.* In answer to the scribe's further question, "Who is my neighbor?" (he knew well enough!) Jesus told the immortal story of the good Samaritan. A man was on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho, a steep descent of almost 4000 feet through a mountain pass. For about twenty miles this road was bordered with caves and gorges, in which bands of robbers hid themselves, and preyed on travellers. It was here that the Englishman, Sir Frederic Henniker, was stripped and murdered by Arab robbers in 1820. The poor fellow

LUKE 10:30. And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on *him*, and passed by on the other side.

of Christ's parable was similarly attacked, stripped of his clothes, and so violently beaten that he was left half dead.

This is Christ's answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" He is any one who is "down and out," any one in distress, any one whom you can help. He is the man whose cattle have gone astray, and you have a chance to drive them back (Deut. 22:1-4). He is the foreigner in a strange land, perplexed and confused (Lev. 19:34). He is a poor debtor, a discharged prisoner, a sobbing orphan. He is any one of Christ's "little ones" (Matt. 10:42), after whom Christ looks most lovingly. He is any one weaker than you, less wise and resourceful (Rom. 15:1, 2), whose "infirmities" you ought to bear, "and not to please yourself." "How near must a person live to me to be my neighbor? Every person is near to you whom you can bless. He is nearest whom you can bless most."—*Channing*. Your neighbor may be in the slums of your city. He may be in China or Africa.

"Thy neighbor? It is he whom thou
Hast power to aid and bless,
Whose aching heart and burning brow
Thy soothing hand may press."

CHRIST'S THIRD RULE: *Help with compassion*. Many are too proud and selfish to help. They are typified by the priest and Levite of the parable, both of whom saw the wounded man, and the Levite went up and looked him over with mean curiosity, but both **passed by on the other side**. The priest, having completed his empty official duties in Jerusalem, was returning to the priestly city of Jericho where he lived. Priest and Levite knew well that both the Law (Deut. 22:4; if an animal, how much more a man?) and the Prophets (Isa. 58:7) commanded them to rescue the poor man, but no one was looking, so why should they take the trouble? Paul had, perhaps, such folk in mind in Gal. 5:25. It is not enough to "live by the Spirit"; all religion is fallacious unless we also "walk by the Spirit." And surely that is not the way the priest and Levite walked on the Jericho road!

Christ chose a Samaritan as an example of a good neighbor, though the Samaritans had just rejected him (Luke 9:53). The people of Samaria were hated and despised by the Jews because (1) they were partly foreign, being descendants of the poor Jews who remained after the Assyrians conquered the land, and intermarried with the heathen immigrants; (2) they rejected all the Hebrew Bible but the Pentateuch; (3) they worshipped on their own Mount Gerizim instead of in the temple at Jerusalem. The remnant of the Samaritans keep these customs to this day.

This Samaritan, with whom the Jews had no dealings (John 4:9), and whom the wounded man himself would have scorned, **had compassion on him**, and so showed himself nobler than priest and Levite. He followed Paul's rule of helpfulness (Eph. 4:32): "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other"; and doubtless he had much to forgive. "The heart that goes out of itself gets large and full. We do ourselves the most good doing



From a photograph by Wilson.
Samaritan High Priest Jacob, Son of Aaron,
with the roll of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

33. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

34. And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

something for others." — *Horace Mann*. "The Spirit of Christ, when it enters the mind, destroys selfishness, and makes us feel that every human being has a claim upon us." — *Stalker*.

"He that turneth from the road to rescue another,
Turneth toward his goal;
He shall arrive in due time by the footpath of mercy,
God will be his guide." — *Henry van Dyke*.

CHRIST'S FOURTH RULE: *Help with healing.* The man's wounds were horrible, but the Samaritan bound them up, **pouring in oil and wine,** "the ordinary remedies of the day." — *Cambridge Bible*. Luke, the physician, took especial note of these medical details of the parable. No helping does much good unless we go to the root of the trouble and try to heal the fundamental disease. This is often sin, and the true helper is often compelled to become an evangelist.

"He that careth for the sick and wounded,
Watcheth not alone;
There are three in the darkness together,
And the third is the Lord." — *Henry van Dyke*.

CHRIST'S FIFTH RULE: *Help with self-sacrifice.* Christ was to give the world the supreme illustration of the truth that there can be no helpfulness without sacrifice. He put that truth into the parable of the good Samaritan. For the Samaritan lifted the wounded man upon his own beast (a very arduous task, if he had no servant),

and trudged along by his side on foot. Then when he reached an inn (perhaps at Bahurim), he spent a good part of the night in ministering to him, disregarding his own weariness and need of sleep. It was as if he had heard Paul saying (1 Cor. 10: 24), "Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good," and (Phil. 2: 4), "Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." "All love



From a photograph.

The Inn of the Good Samaritan on the Road to Jericho.

is sacrifice — the giving of life and self for others." — *Robertson*. "Every act of men which can be called good is an act of sacrifice, an act which the doer of it would have left undone had he not preferred some other persons to his own, or the excellence of the work on which he was engaged to his personal pleasure or convenience." — *J. A. Froude*.

"Life is the tuning-time, complete
Alone when every chord is sweet
Through sacrifice." — *George Klinger*.

CHRIST'S SIXTH RULE: *Help with money.* It is easy for many to give time and care to the needy, but they hate to part with money. The good Samaritan did not

36. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37. And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

GAL. 6: 1. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

stick at that, but the next day, on leaving, he gave the landlord two denarii, enough to keep the sick man for several days; moreover, he promised to come back and pay whatever additional the landlord expended upon him. He did not intend to spoil his good deed, as so many do, by leaving it half finished. See what Christ said in Matt. 5: 42, and Christ's beloved disciple in 1 John 3: 17, 18.

Illustration. A rich man once sent a poor man, anonymously, twenty-five dollars, merely saying in the accompanying note, "More to follow." After a while he sent another twenty-five dollars, with the same message, "More to follow." And so he gave, again and again, always with the same cheering word. That is the way God gives, and God's people. Always, as long as the need lasts, there is "more to follow."

"Dead is the hand that is not open wide
To help the need of a human brother;
He doubles the length of his life-long ride
Who gives of his fortunes to help another;
And a thousand million lives are his
Who carries the world in his sympathies.
To give
Is to live."

CHRIST'S SEVENTH RULE: "*Go, and do thou likewise.*" The lawyer was obliged to admit the point of Christ's parable, that the true neighbor in this case was not the priest or the Levite, but the despised Samaritan, the man who helped. Then Christ drove home the application with a lightning stroke: "Then go and imitate that Samaritan!" Theorizing is not enough, Christ implied. Definitions of a neighbor are not enough. Go and be one! Many are helpful in their pleased imaginations that never lift a hand to their brother's need.

"Help whomever, whenever, you can;
Man forever needs aid from man;
Let never a day die in the west
That you have not comforted some sad breast." — *Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

II. PAUL'S SEVEN RULES OF HELPFULNESS. Gal. 6: 1-10. Paul wrote his letter to the Galatian Christians in order to defend his apostolical authority and especially his great doctrine of justification by faith, but the close of the epistle is occupied with practical exhortations based upon that doctrinal teaching. These verses, Gal. 6: 1-10, are taken from that section, and we may draw from them seven rules of helpfulness, rules that are especially helpful as coming from so helpful a man as Paul, Christ's chief apostle.

PAUL'S FIRST RULE: *Help in humility*, vs. 1, 3, 4. The early churches were not perfect, any more than modern churches, and now and then some Christian would be detected in wrong-doing. In that case, Paul says, those who have the spiritual gifts, and so are leaders of the church, are to bring the erring one back to a right course of life and to his proper place in the Christian brotherhood; and whoever undertakes this delicate work is to do it in a spirit of meekness, having regard to his own liability to fall beneath the onset of temptation. Really, he is nothing, and Christ is everything, so that pride and censoriousness are absurd in him. If he sets himself up by comparing himself with his weaker brother, he is glorying not in his own deeds but in his brother's misdeeds; let him do good deeds himself, if he would have something to be proud of!

No proud man or conceited man can really help another. He can help only in the way Christ helped, by getting close to the needy and putting his arm around him. "O God, if we do aught that is good it is thine act and not ours; crown thine own work in us, and take thou the glory of thine own mercies." — *Bishop Hall.* "The true way to be humble is not to stoop till you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height against some higher nature that shall show you what the real smallness of your greatest greatness is." — *Phillips Brooks.* (Thus one

2. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

9. And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

day the writer, who is six feet two inches tall, stole up behind Phillips Brooks, and at once felt like a dwarf in the presence of that giant !)

"These things keep meekly hid:
Myself, and I,
And mine, and my,
And how I do or did."

PAUL'S SECOND RULE: *Bear others' burdens*, v. 2. We are to bear **one another's burdens**, we theirs and they ours. Mutual burden-bearing alone fulfils (fills full) the law of Christ, which is loving sympathy. The reference is not to any special command of Christ, but to the general spirit of his teaching and life. "We are not to carry others' burdens that they can carry as well as ourselves. True helpfulness consists in giving comfort; and comfort means giving strength to those who are weary by inspiring them when they hesitate or fail." — *Mears*. Thus Paul would have the Galatians bear the burdens of those overtaken in wrongdoing.

"He that taketh up the burden of the fainting
Lighteneth his own load;
The Almighty will put his arms underneath him,
He shall lean upon the Lord." — *Henry van Dyke*.

"Did you give him a lift? He's a brother of man,
And bearing about all the burden he can.
Did you give him a smile? He was downcast and blue,
And the smile would have helped him to battle it through."

PAUL'S THIRD RULE: *Bear your own burden*, v. 5. The Greek word translated *burden* in this verse is "a different word from that in verse 2, which means a heavy weight, something distressing to be borne. The word in this verse is used for a soldier's kit, and also for anything to be carried, apart from any idea of its weight. Therefore 'load,' which the Revisers suggest in their margin, is more appropriate. In the one case, the burden is a defect of character; in the other, it is the obligation of duty. The contradiction between the two verses is only apparent and verbal. We are to help each other out of evil ways; at the same time each man must do his own duty." — *New Century Bible*. By bearing our own burdens manfully we help others to bear their burdens in the same way. Our example stimulates their courage, and at the same time often shows them practically how to do it.

Illustration. In most shops the work of one person is largely dependent upon the work of others, so that if one worker is slow, other workers are hindered all along the line. In the building where a periodical is published, for instance, the editors must wait for the authors and illustrators and engravers, the compositors must wait for the editors and proofreaders, the printers must wait for the electrotypers, the binders for the printers, the mailers for the binders.

PAUL'S FOURTH RULE: *Help teachers*, v. 6. So far, Paul has been writing directly to the leaders of the Galatian church, though his words have many applications to all Christians. In this verse he addresses not the leaders but the led, not the teachers but the taught. They in turn are to help those that have helped them, giving them proper support and all other good things. Paul often urges in his letters the duty of supporting ministers of the gospel. He would find it necessary to repeat the exhortation to-day. It has been estimated that one-third of the preachers of the United States receive salaries averaging less than \$400 a year, while the average wages of thirteen trades in New York City is \$1200 a year.

But preachers, teachers, editors, authors, parents, all whose duty is the instructing, guiding, and inspiring of others, need help in other ways than money. Especially, they need gratitude and praise for the good they do. Many are afraid to praise sermons for fear the minister's head will be turned. They would lose that fear if they knew how seldom ministers receive the honor that is due to their unselfish efforts.

PAUL'S FIFTH RULE: *Seek the rewards of helpfulness*, vs. 7, 8. **Be not deceived**, says Paul, by those that seem to prosper while they live selfish lives. **God is not**

thus **mocked** with impunity ; for if a man sows seeds of selfishness, he shall reap the harvest of ruin ; if he drops the seed into the soil of a carnal, self-seeking life, he shall reap only " blighted and putrescent grain " (Lightfoot) ; while if he sows his seed in the soil of a Spirit-filled life, he shall reap out of that soil the life that endures forever. " Service for others is just as essential to our real happiness and our highest welfare as is the fact that we work for our individual welfare. No man lives to himself alone." — *Ralph Waldo Trine.*

"Be not selfish in thy greed,
Pass it on!
Look upon your brother's need,
Pass it on!
Live for self, you live in vain,
Live for Christ, you live again;
Live for him, with him you reign —
Pass it on!" — *Rev. Henry Burton.*

Illustration. Once Dorothea Dix was travelling in Missouri, through what was then a wild region infested with robbers. Suddenly one of these desperadoes jumped out from the bushes, seized the horses by the bits, and demanded money. Said Miss Dix, calmly, " Why should you take my money ? Do you need help, food, or clothing ? It is my mission to help the unfortunate. Tell me what you wish, and I will give you all the aid within my power." The man looked at her a minute. " That voice ! " he exclaimed, and stood aside to let her pass. It turned out that while he was a convict in an Eastern prison years before, Miss Dix had befriended him. Now he recognized her and let her go unmolested.

"He gives the most who bravely lends a hand
To help his brother in his hour of need;
God keeps the record — he can understand,
And of our slightest service will take heed."

PAUL'S SIXTH RULE : *Be unwearied in your helpfulness,* v. 9. Farming is hard work, and helpfulness Paul has just compared to farming. But let us not get tired of it, he says, for if we keep at it the harvest is sure to come in its proper season. There are many discouragements when we try to help others. We find we are not so tactful and skilful as we need to be ; we discover ourselves lacking in patience, sympathy, and perseverance. Sometimes the indifference, ingratitude, and obstinacy of those we are trying to help weary us most of all. But — **we shall reap, if we faint not!**

Illustration. In a rough Western town a Christian woman heard that a miner was dying all alone, the other miners merely putting food down by him and then going away because he was so ugly. This woman brought him delicacies which he received thanklessly and even with curses. After many attempts, one night she failed to include the miner in her prayers. Her little boy noticed it and asked, " Have you given him up ? " " I am afraid so, dear," she answered sadly. " Has God given him up, too ? " asked the child. That question sent her back to the miner, and at last her efforts melted his hard heart and won him before death to the Lord of life.

PAUL'S SEVENTH RULE : *Help all, especially other Christians,* v. 10. " Therefore," says Paul, " since there is a season for reaping, let us seize the season for sowing good deeds " (" opportunity " here is the same Greek word rendered " season " in v. 9), " helping all men, and especially those of our own dear Christian family, the brotherhood bound together by faith in Jesus Christ." Helping our fellow Christians will lead outward into helpfulness to all others. The church that takes the best care of its own poor gives the most to foreign missions.

Illustration. Phillips Brooks imagines a workman laboring on a building which " by and by is to toss its pinnacles up to heaven ; and I see him looking up and wondering where those pinnacles are to be, thinking how high they are to be, wondering how they are to be built ; and all the time he is cramming a rotten stone into the building just where he has set to work." If we do not make our own church strong and Christlike, it will never reach out into all the world.

PAUL'S SUMMARY OF HELPFULNESS. In 1 Cor. 13 : 1-13 Paul has given us a wonderful treatise on helpfulness. The basis of helpfulness, he there tells us, is love. Without love one may give all his goods to feed the poor, and it would profit nothing. Love has all the elements necessary to supreme helpfulness : kindness, humility, long-suffering, endurance, hope, perseverance. If any one would be really helpful, let him build this chapter into his life.

III. OTHER BIBLE HINTS ON HELPFULNESS. The Bible is the world's greatest guide to helpfulness. No other book is so helpful, or so nobly teaches one to be helpful. Many suggestions may easily be found by the pupil and added to the following.

Help by kindly speech, Prov. 12:25. Surely "a good word" makes any heart "glad." "If thou wouldst be a good neighbor, take heed of thy tongue." — *John Bunyan*. "There may be times when silence is gold and speech silver; but there are times also when silence is death and speech is life — the very life of Pentecost." — *Max Müller*.

"He that speaketh comfortable words to mourners
Healeth his own heart;
In his time of grief they will return to remembrance,
God will use them for balm." — *Henry van Dyke*.

Help in little ways, Matt. 10:42. A cup of cold water given to a child is not a great gift in itself, but it is great as given to Christ. Such a cup, brought to David from the Bethlehem well, he held too sacred to drink. Every least gift of kindness may become, as in Lowell's "Sir Launfal," a genuine Holy Grail.

Help in times of trouble, Prov. 17:17. "A brother is born for adversity." "Fair-weather friendship" has, and deserves to have, the world's scorn. We are not to save our helpfulness for stormy days, but we must be sure to show it then.

Illustration. The failure of General Grant's business firm left him penniless. At once Maties Romero, the Mexican ambassador to the United States, called on him. Half-embarrassed, as if asking a favor, Romero said he had some money in bank and he wanted Grant to accept it. General Grant, deeply moved, went to consult his wife. When he returned, he found on the table a check reading up into four figures, and Romero gone. This money tided Grant over till he could write his famous Memoirs.

Help by honoring others, Rom. 12:10. We are to "prefer one another in honor" by the absence of self-pushing and by the frank and full recognition of all that is good in others. We are not to help unworthy persons to positions they cannot properly fill, but one of the Christian's pleasantest ways of helping is to aid the advancement of the deserving. Every Christian should be a free employment office.

Help by rejoicing and weeping, Rom. 12:15. It is sometimes easier to weep with the weepers than to rejoice with the rejoicing, and sometimes the sympathy in rejoicing is easiest. Cold indifference prevents the first, envy and selfishness the second. But both are most helpful, and both are likely to be neglected.

Christ is our model of helpfulness. This is the most important and comprehensive rule of helpfulness: Follow Christ. We are to please our neighbors for their good, because Christ also pleased not himself (Rom. 15:3). Indeed, because Christ laid down his life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters in need (1 John 3:16). Our Saviour was the most helpful being that ever lived on earth, and a Christian is one who is like Christ.

"Him we behold not, him shall we never know
Till we behold him in the least of these
Who suffer or who sin." — *Lucy Larcom*.

LESSON VII. — August 18.

WORKING IN THE CHURCH. — Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-35; 6:2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, And into his courts with praise: Give thanks unto him, and bless his name.* — Ps. 100:4.

Devotional Reading: Ps. 122:1-9.

Additional Material for Teachers: Mark 11:15-17; Acts 10:33; 1 Cor. 3:9; 12:4-29; Eph. 4:1-7, 11-16.

Junior Memory Verses: Ps. 100:1-5.

Story Material: Neh. 8:1-18.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: The Church: Its Claims and How We May Meet Them.

Additional Material: Ps. 84:1-12; 133:1-3; Matt. 18:19, 20; Rom. 12:1-13; 1 Cor. 14:15-19, 40; Gal. 5:13-15; Heb. 10:25.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

In the primary and junior departments the story of the early Bible school in Neh. 8 will be used, added to the account of the early church in Acts. Intermediate classes will take the Acts passages and consider the claims of the church. It will be a good time for the teacher to urge church membership upon them. The adult classes will take up the wide range of church work, emphasizing the points that will be most helpful in the especial circumstances of the local church.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on the Acts. Poems and hymns on the church, such as Will Carleton's "The Model Church" and "The Church's One Foundation." Books on church union, such as Charles M. Sheldon's "The Miracle of Markham" and Amos R. Wells's "That They All May Be One." Books on the history and organization of the various denominations, such as the "American Denominations" series, or, for all the denominations, Carroll's *Religious Forces of the United States*.

THE ROUND TABLE.
FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The characteristics of an ideal church.
 How a church should affect its community.
 How a church gains power.
 How church union may be brought about.
 The most useful church organizations.
 Our duty toward the church.
 What the church does for us.

LEARN BY HEART.

Ps. 122:1; Heb. 10:25; Eph. 4:4-6.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — The years covered by the description of the early church included in our lesson are those immediately following the crucifixion of Christ, A.D. 29 or 30. The place is Jerusalem.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Church: Its Claims and How We May Meet Them.

I. THE WORSHIPPING CHURCH, Acts 2:
 41-47.

A picture of the ideal church: ingathering, instruction, helpfulness, worship, growth.

II. THE WITNESSING CHURCH, Acts 4:
 32-35.

What enables a church to witness for Christ: unity, testimony, grace, brotherhood.

III. THE ORGANIZED CHURCH, Acts 6:
 2-4.

The need for organization.
 The beginnings of organization.
 Modern church organization and our relation to it.

IV. OTHER BIBLE TEACHINGS ABOUT
THE CHURCH AND ITS WORK.

The church's purity.
 Church attendance.
 Christian union.
 A praying church.
 An orderly church.
 Paul's picture of an ideal church.

ACTS 2:41. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

I. THE WORSHIPPING CHURCH, Acts 2:41-47. The first church was very close to the Master, in place and time and membership. The picture of it given in these verses is the picture of an ideal church, full of instruction for modern Christians.

1. INGATHERING, v. 41. This ideal church was founded on a great manifestation of the promised power of the kingdom of God (Mark 9:1). The church began that day with one hundred and twenty members and ended the day with a membership of thirty-one hundred and twenty. Nor was it a mere paper enrolment: they were *enthusiastic* Christians, having received the word *gladly*; and they were *obedient* Christians, for they were baptized according to Christ's command, thus confessing him before men. This is the kind of membership that counts in any church.

Illustrations. The pastor of a New York church, not long since, had the list of his church members cut down from 2300 to 969, those cut off being absentees and others who were plainly unfaithful to their church vows. The church was doubtless stronger for this pruning.

Pentecosts are not unknown in modern times. In Billy Sunday's various evangelistic campaigns, for instance, he has brought to Christ fully 250,000 souls.

2. INSTRUCTION, vs. 42, 43. Feeling, powerful and necessary as it is, is not enough for the foundation of a church. The early Christians wisely added instruction to it. The **teaching** of the apostles was doubtless a repetition of the teaching of

42. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44. And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45. And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Christ, so warm and fresh in their memory, with comments such as Christ's crucifixion and resurrection would render inevitable. Thus the members of the church would hold the truest **fellowship** with the apostles, fellowship of the spirit; but it was emphasized by participation in the **breaking of bread**, or communion service in private houses, and also by the **prayers**, which closed the communion service, and also doubtless by participation in the temple prayer services. The result of this devout meditation was a holy **fear** (rather awe), enhanced by the miracles which the apostles worked, as Christ had prophesied.

Instruction is a part of the work of every true church. Read Neh. 8:1-18 for a fine illustration of the close connection between teaching and worship, and of the effect of the law of God upon character and action. Nehemiah's Bible school was the precursor of our modern Bible school, with its millions of pupils and teachers, the greatest religious educational agency in the world. Every Christian should be a member. "The more you know of God's Word, the more you can live by God's Word; and the more you are living by God's Word, the better you can understand God's Word. But if you keep it at arm's length, and dally with it, and play around it, then years may pass without your having progressed one whit." — *John A. Broadus*.

Illustration. "In Korea before baptism each candidate is expected to read the life of Christ as found in one or more Gospels, and to be so familiar with its facts as to stand a rigorous examination. The Bible has been the book in the training of the native pastorate, and the Bible text, rather than lesson helps and commentaries, is the great underlying foundation of Korea's famous Sunday schools. But best of all, it has become part and parcel of the Christian. It has even introduced a convenience in dress. The national costume has no pockets. But the Korean simply must carry his Bible with him. At first he used to wrap it and his hymn-book in a napkin which he held in his hand or slung over his shoulder. Influenced by his American teachers, he extemporized a pocket in his jacket, the first one known to the natives, and hence still called 'the Bible pocket.'" — *The Continent*.

3. **HELPLESSNESS**, vs. 44, 45. A truly instructed Christian is likely to be a helpful Christian. In the first church **all that believed** (in Jesus Christ) **were together**. They did not dwell in one house, but they often came together. **And had all things common**. There is no reason to think that this means the establishment of communism or socialism; for if so, we should have some indication of it later in the Acts and the New Testament. It only means that wherever there was need the well-to-do Christians sold their goods and gave the money to the needy, so that all could spend their time in telling about Christ. But how much that means! Every true church of Christ will be bound together into a working force by the spirit of mutual helpfulness.

Illustration. "Sydney Smith had two yokes of oxen on his little farm in Yorkshire, to which he gave the names of 'Tug' and 'Lug,' 'Haul' and 'Crawl.' These would be appropriate names for a large class of church members who put no heart into their Christian work. It is mere tug and toil and task to them." — *Cuyler*. With these early Christians it was all joy and zest, and that is why the church grew so rapidly. They felt that they were "God's fellow-workers" (1 Cor. 3:9).

4. **WORSHIP**, vs. 46, 47a. Instruction and practical work soon grow lax and fruitless without worship, so that we are not surprised to learn that the early Christians spent much time every day in the temple, joining in the worship there and doubtless using their opportunities to persuade others to become Christians. More-

47. Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

ACTS 4:32. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of *them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

over, they added to the temple worship the celebration of the Lord's supper in their own homes, for not even church religion can last long without family religion. This constant "practice of the presence of God" made them so cheerful and happy that every one liked them—a result that follows the Christian spirit to this day. For beautiful expressions of joy in worship read Ps. 100:1-5; 122:1-9.

Illustration. "A young girl, who had lately become a Christian, seemed full of religious feeling. She listened intently to sermons, she sang hymns devoutly, she read religious books. But, as her brother expressed it, 'Louise feels good all the while, but she doesn't make good.' Her feelings moved continually through her heart, using it as a marching road; but they never took root there, as in a field growing toward harvest time." — *Forward.* The early Christians did not make this mistake. Note that the statement of their practical activity is made *before* that of their activity in worship.

5. GROWTH, v. 47b. The Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved, or, were in the way of salvation. A church such as has been described is sure to grow. If a church is not adding new members constantly, it is because it lacks intelligence, practical helpfulness, or spirituality,—perhaps all three. Many a church is satisfied if its additions by letter keep up its numbers. That is a growth at the expense of some other church and is no real growth for the kingdom of God.

Illustration. "The most vital of all community centers," said President Woodrow Wilson, "is not the school, but the local church." A traveller stood in Stirling Castle, Scotland, while the guide pointed out the battlefield of Bannockburn. Turning, the visitor saw John Knox's pulpit. The one was a symbol of earthly strife, the other of heavenly peace and power. Soon after he went through a vast factory of war munitions. Near by was a little Methodist chapel which could be put in a corner of the great factory; yet the chapel stood for eternal growth and the factory for destruction.

11. THE WITNESSING CHURCH. ACTS 4:32-35. The early church grew because it was a witnessing church, obeying the command of its divine Founder (Luke 24:48; Matt. 28:19, 20). Studying the example of the first Christians we shall see how a church is enabled to witness for Christ.

1. UNITY, v. 32. These believers **were of one heart and soul**, and they proved their spiritual brotherhood by a practical brotherhood in possessions. In his last prayer in the upper room Christ prayed for his followers' unity, in order that as a result the world might come to believe in him (John 17:21). Nothing will do more to commend Christianity to the world than for worldlings to be compelled to exclaim, "How these Christians love one another!"

Illustration. "Christians are like the several flowers in a garden that have each of them the dew of heaven, which, being shaken with the wind, they let fall at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished and become nourishers of each other." — *John Bunyan.*

2. TESTIMONY, v. 33. Personal testimony was at the bottom of the success of the early church. **With great power gave the apostles their witness** (the witness it was their duty to give) **of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.** That great event, as we see from the recorded sermons of the apostles, was the beginning from which they went on to set forth Christ's claims upon the allegiance of all men. It is still the corner-stone of Christian evidences.

Illustration. All are to tell the good news of Jesus Christ, the least as well as the greatest. "As well might a little child in the family, who heard the father's dying words, 'God bless you, my children, and make you true and faithful men and women,' say to himself, 'My father's message was not for me, but for my older brothers and sisters. It puts no responsibility upon me.' Our Saviour's message is for all." — *Dr. Francis E. Clark.*

34. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35. And laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

ACTS 6:2. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

3. GRACE, v. 33. **Great grace was upon them all.** "Like their Master, while experiencing the favor of God, they were also finding favor with men. Compare Acts 5:13." — *Cambridge Bible*. A Christian church, like the Christian himself, must be liked, if it is to do any good. It cannot win without being winsome. Modern churches do much to make themselves attractive — beautiful buildings, eloquent sermons, rich music, moving pictures, socials, flowers, gifts to the poor; but all this is useless without *grace*, the heart of love shining through the faces of Christ's disciples and reflected in the faces of all that see them.

4. BROTHERHOOD, vs. 34, 35. Again we read of the generosity of the early church, how no member was allowed to be in want, but the wealthy sold houses or lands (it is not said that they sold all they owned), and laid the proceeds at the feet of the apostles, thus giving the apostles entire control over the money. Then the church leaders divided it among the needy in proportion to their needs. This was the last element needed to procure power for the witnessing of the early church. Practical beneficence will go far to convince any man that the religion back of it is true. Thus the rescue missions distribute rolls and coffee before their meetings on cold winter evenings. Thus Christianity has brought into existence associated charities, and free hospitals, and almshouses, and old folks' homes, and orphanages, and many other noble and blessed institutions. The church must continue to fill them all with living, personal love, and then each of them will testify of Jesus Christ. "Kindness has converted more sinners than either zeal, eloquence, or learning; and these three never converted any one unless they were kind also." — *J. J. Murray*.

III. THE ORGANIZED CHURCH, Acts 6:2-4. An organ is a contrivance for doing things. The lowest forms of animal life have no organs because they have so few things to do. They are only jelly-like masses, portions of which protrude to act as hand, or foot, or stomach, and then return into the shapeless mass. Organs are a sure sign of progress, and it was inevitable that the growing Christian church should develop organs, become organized. Those that object to the high state of church organization of to-day do not realize that it simply means that the church has many things to do, and has developed instrumentalities with which to do them.

THE NEED OF ORGANIZATION in the early church arose from the overwork of the twelve apostles. The number of Christians had grown so large that they could not properly attend to the daily distribution of the church's bounty to the poor. Among the poor were a number of Greek-speaking widows, who were especially desolate because they spoke a foreign language, and were left lonely in a strange land. Complaint was made that they were neglected while the Hebrew widows were well cared for. The apostles did not deny the charge, but, calling a church meeting, merely said, **It is not reason** (or reasonable) **that we should leave the word of God** (their great work of preaching), **and serve tables** (the benches or counters over which the daily disbursals of money were made). The principle involved is at the basis of all church organization, — many different kinds of work to be done, and the wisdom of setting over each kind of work those who can do it best.

THE BEGINNINGS OF ORGANIZATION, vs. 3, 4. The choice of seven deacons (the word "deacon" means "server") was the beginning of church organization. Seven was a "sacred number," and probably in this case a convenient number. The method of choice was democratic, the entire church was to select them; but the

apostles were to ordain them (v. 6) with prayer and the laying on of hands, a symbolic passing on of authority and spiritual power. These seven men were to be of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom -- a formula which should hold true of all church officers to-day. We know from the further account in the Acts how well Philip and Stephen answered to this description. All seven deacons bore Greek names, -- a token that the Greek widows would no more be neglected. The fairness, comprehensiveness, and spirituality of this first church organization make it a model for all the church organizations to follow through the ages.

MODERN CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND OUR RELATION TO IT. In a famous passage, 1 Cor. 12:4-29, Paul describes the "many members" in the "body of Christ," which is the church. Some of these members do one thing, others do other things, just like the organs of a body; and as, in a body, when one member or organ is sick the whole body is sick, so is it with the church.

Modern times have seen a great increase in the number of these church organizations. The Sunday school, the Y.M.C.A., the Young People's Society, the W.C.T.U., Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, Knights of King Arthur, the Brotherhoods of the different denominations, the Loyal Legion, the Lincoln Legion, the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip, King's Daughters and King's Sons, women's missionary societies, maternal associations, the Gideons -- one could continue for many pages naming the organizations which have sprung up in the church or closely connected with it. What is the modern Christian's right relation to them all?

He should join as many as fairly appeal to his ability, and he should serve in them as faithfully and zealously as possible. They are all doing Christ's work, and doing it far more efficiently than it could be done without them. They need and rightfully demand the support of Christians.

We have not too many organizations. There are Christians enough to make them all go with a swing. We should glory in our highly organized Christianity, and count ourselves happy in rendering stronger as many as possible of these organs of the body of Christ.

IV. OTHER BIBLE TEACHINGS ABOUT THE CHURCH AND ITS WORK.

THE CHURCH'S PURITY. Twice during his short ministry, at the beginning and at the close, our Lord drove from the temple the money-changers, the dove-sellers, and the other traffickers that profaned the house of God (Mark 11:15-17), just as St. Paul's Cathedral in London used to be made a common place for the transaction of all kinds of business. If Christ were to enter our churches, would he not find need of the same stern action? Do we not often think of worldly matters during the prayers and sermons? Does not the commercial spirit sometimes enter into a church's dealings with its pastor, into the church entertainments, into the renting of pews? The church is to preach against worldliness and convert it. How can it do so unless it is itself pure from the deadly taint of greed, of ambition, and of dishonesty?

CHURCH ATTENDANCE. No better formula for church attendance was ever given than the wise words of Cornelius to Peter, "Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord" (Acts 10:33). There is the full congregation, the consciousness of God's presence, the Spirit-filled preacher ready to pass God's message along to waiting hearts. The Old Testament is full of the joy of church attendance, and especially the Psalms of that great church-lover, David (Ps. 84, and many others). Our Lord himself, we are told, was a regular attendant upon the synagogue. Christians of all time, following his example, have "not forsaken their assembling together" (Heb. 10:25), but have found in regular church attendance one of the greatest comforts and encouragements of their lives. Wisely do the Christian Endeavorers make regular church attendance an item in their earnest pledge.

CHRISTIAN UNION. Jesus must have foreseen the lamentable divisions among his followers, or he would not have prayed so earnestly for their union in his last prayer (John 17). What must he think of the one hundred and sixty-eight denominations in the United States alone? "Behold," cried David, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Ps. 133:1-3.) We are poorly illustrating that psalm to-day. Paul often emphasized the great truth that there is only "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:1-7, 11-16; Gal. 5:13-15). The forces of evil are united; the churches should be united in opposition to them. If the Christian churches should come together in an effective union, the saloon would be driven out of our land in a year, and every other iniquity would hide its head. The tendency to Christian union is happily growing. Some de-

nominations have already united, others are negotiating unions. There is growing cooperation on the mission fields. Especially do we rejoice in the increasing effectiveness of the great Federation of the Churches. All such movements are the beginnings of an answer to Christ's prayer "that they all may be one."



Illustration. Sir Edwin Arnold, in *Pearls of the Faith*, tells of four men who agreed to put their pittance together to purchase a meal, but fell to disputing as to what the repast should be. The Turk insisted on having azum, the Persian wished anghur, the Arab suggested aneb, while the Greek wanted staphylion. As they disputed vehemently, there passed an ass, bearing panniers laden with purple grapes. "See azum," said the Turk, and "See anghum," said the Persian; "what could be better?" "Nay, 'tis aneb," the Arab cried. The Greek said, "That is my staphylion." Then they bought their grapes in peace. Thus if Christians could break down the barriers of words which separate the sects, would they not find that they are all seeking the one Lord, Christ the Crucified?

A PRAYING CHURCH. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," said Christ, "there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18: 19, 20). The early church was a praying church. As the church was holding a prayer meeting for him, Peter was delivered from prison. Through all the Christian ages the churches of power have been churches whose prayer meetings were most earnest and vigorous. The Christian Endeavor movement is based upon the prayer meeting. American foreign missions began with the famous Haystack prayer meeting. Our missionaries, much as they need our money, entreat us more eagerly for our prayers.

AN ORDERLY CHURCH. "Let all things be done decently and in order," says Paul in a famous passage (1 Cor. 14: 15-19, 40). System in church work is of great importance. Without it organization becomes a hodge-podge. Each organization must be conducted in an orderly fashion, and the work of the entire church must go on like the mechanism of a clock; but with heart in it, not mechanically. Much has been said recently about efficiency in business. The motions made by coal-shovellers have been studied, that the most useful movements may be selected; and even the size and shape of their shovels, that the ideal load may be determined. We need to be as careful in managing our church work, allowing no waste movements, no idle energy, no overlapping of effort.

PAUL'S PICTURE OF AN IDEAL CHURCH. In Rom. 12: 1-13 (this has been called the Christian Endeavor chapter of the Bible) Paul sums up much of what we have had brought out in this lesson, and shows us many of the qualities of an ideal church: its purity (v. 1), its unworldliness (v. 2), its humility (v. 3), its brotherhood (vs. 4, 5), its testimony (v. 6), its practical service (v. 7), its instruction (v. 7), its giving (v. 8), its organization (v. 8), its lovingkindness (vs. 8-10), its zeal (v. 11), its patience (v. 12), its prayerfulness (v. 12), its care of its own members and of strangers (v. 13). It is well for every church member to go over this list point by point, considering honestly whether his own dear church will meet the test, and, if not, what he can do to remedy the defect.

A MODERN SUMMARY. "I believe that no man can be a successful Christian, a happy Christian, or a faithful Christian, if he fails to identify himself with the people of God. But if the church is to hold her membership and influence in the community as she may, I should like to suggest the following:

"1. The church must reflect the spirit of Jesus.

"2. The church must go out after the lost. A church existing for herself is not a blessing to the community.

"3. The church must care for her own. We do not need ministers who can 'draw' so much as churches that can 'hold' by sympathy, by love, and by the power that comes from walking with Christ.

"4. The church must remember that she is not the minister's 'field' but his 'force.'

"5. The church must give the minister an atmosphere in which to preach. Many ministers fail because this is lacking.

"6. The church must care for the new converts. A convert to grow must have the atmosphere in which he was born, and let us never forget that the new convert will catch quickly the spirit of the church of which he is a member.

"7. The church is a harbor for tempest-tossed souls. She must be true to this ideal." — *Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman.*

"If we of later times have lost
The virtue of a Pentecost
When one small band who came to pray
Won many thousands in a day;
It may be now and then that we
Are somewhat prone to disagree,—
Whereas they bowed before the Lord
And worshipped him with one accord;
It may be that our fancies stray
Out of his house and far away,—
While these devoutly sought his face
With mind and body in one place." — *Roy Temple House.*

LESSON VIII. — August 25.

SPEAKING FOR CHRIST. — Luke 12:8-12; Acts 1:1-8.

(May be used with missionary applications.)

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Every one who shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.* — LUKE 12:8.

Devotional Reading : Jas. 3:1-18.

Additional Material for Teachers : Ps. 145:1-21; Prov. 25:11; Mark 5:19, 20; John 1:40-46; Acts 4:18-20; Phil. 2:11; Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 3:15.

Primary and Junior Topic : Showing Our Love for Jesus.

Lesson Material : Matt. 25:34-40.

Memory Verse : By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. — John 13:35.

Story Material : Matt. 16:13-18; 26:69-75; John 21:15-17.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic : Confessing Christ, and Other Christian Uses of Speech.

Additional Material : Matt. 12:34-37; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14, 16-18; Jas. 1:19, 26; 3:1-18.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Both the passage in Luke and that in James are suitable for primary and junior classes, and many illustrations of the right and wrong uses of speech may be drawn from child life. Intermediate and senior pupils are at the age when confession of Christ and joining the church should be urged. In the adult classes the social uses of speech and the power of Christian testimony will properly serve as the main themes.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — The passage from Luke belongs to Christ's ministry after he had left Galilee and was in Peræa during the weeks just before his crucifixion. James, the brother of our Lord, wrote his Epistle at Jerusalem between A.D. 44 and A.D. 51 (Plumptre).

LEARN BY HEART.

Luke 12:8; Prov. 25:11; Ps. 145:21.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The confession that Christ requires.
What is blasphemy?
The unpardonable sin.
Who should be Christ's witnesses?
Power of the tongue for good.
Power of the tongue for evil.
Missionary uses of speech.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Luke and James. Hymns and other poems on speech, such as Miss Havergal's "Tell it out among the heathen," her "Have you not a word for Jesus?" and "Only a word for the Master." Books on evangelism, such as Pope's "Second Timothy 2:15" and Torrey's "How to Win Men to Christ."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Confessing Christ, and Other Christian Uses of Speech.

I. CONFESSION, BLASPHEMY, TESTIMONY, Luke 12:8-12.

Confessing or denying Christ.
Blasphemy against Christ and the Holy Spirit.
Speaking boldly for Christ.
Witness-bearing on the mission fields.

II. POWER FOR WITNESS-BEARING, Acts 1:1-8.

Waiting for orders.
"Ye shall receive power."
The Spirit's power on the mission fields.

III. OTHER BIBLE TEACHINGS ABOUT SPEECH.

Power of the tongue for evil.
Power of the tongue for good.
Speech in worship.
Controlled speech.
Courteous speech.
Convincing speech.
Instructive speech.
Idle speech.
Warning speech.
Happy speech.

LUKE 12:8. Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

9. But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

10. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

I. CONFESSION, BLASPHEMY, TESTIMONY, Luke 12:8-12. These verses belong to an extended collection of Christ's sayings placed after his final departure from Galilee, and occupying the chapters between Luke 9:51 and Luke 19:27. This section of the Gospel contains many of Christ's richest sayings and parables.

CONFESSING OR DENYING CHRIST, vs. 8, 9. Our Lord was approaching the climax of the great conflict between divine Goodness and the world's sinfulness. He knew that it meant death for him and many trials for his followers. They would need some rich promise, or they might prove false under the sore temptation. Therefore he solemnly said, **Every one who shall confess me before men** (acknowledging him to be the Son of God and the rightful King of men), **him shall the Son of man also confess** (acknowledge to be his follower) **before the angels of God** (referring to the angels who would be with him at his second coming): **but he that denieth me in the presence of men** (saying that Christ was a mere man, an impostor) **shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God.** Christ would say, "He is none of mine."

Among those listening to Christ was Peter, who in a few weeks was to make the Great Denial (Matt. 26:69-75), after being the first of the disciples to make the Great Confession (Matt. 16:13-18). Such confessions as Peter's are the rock on which Christ builds his church, and it is God's will that all men everywhere should make them (Phil. 2:11). The simplest, most straightforward, and most effective way to confess Christ is to join his church. That way is open to every one.

Illustration. After his conversion Peter Bohler said, "I had better keep silent about it." "No," said Charles Wesley, "if you had ten thousand tongues you had better use them for Christ." Then Wesley was moved to write his great hymn,

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of his grace."

BLASPHEMING AGAINST CHRIST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, v. 10. **Every one who shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him;** of course, if he asks for forgiveness. **But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven.** "To speak against the Son of man is to say evil of Jesus as a person seen in the world, but not really understood and appreciated; to blaspheme the Holy Spirit is to rail against the light within and deny the divine and good in our own conscience." — *New Century Bible*. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unpardonable because the heart of the sinner is too hardened to ask for pardon. No one who is in awe of God, who loves him and wants to serve him, has committed the unpardonable sin. The very fear that one has committed it is proof that one has not.

11. And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

12. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

Swearing has been called our American sin, so common is it. It is the least excusable of sins, the most foolish. It gets a grip on one before he knows it. The only safety is that gentleness and simplicity of speech which Christ advocated, "Let your speech be Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay."

Illustrations. "A small office boy was chafed about his size till he could stand it no longer. 'Small as I am,' said he, 'I can do something no man in this office can do.' 'What's that, Bobby?' they all shouted. 'Keep from swearing,' Robert replied." — *New York Observer*.

A lady riding on the New York Central was greatly disturbed by the conversation of two men in the seat in front of her. One of them, who seemed to be a college student, used very profane language. At last she asked him quietly if he was a student of languages. "Yes, madam, I have a knowledge of several languages." "Do you read and speak Greek?" "Quite well, madam." "Then will you kindly do your swearing in Greek?" The lady was not annoyed any more.

Christopher Wren, the great architect of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, during the building had a notice put on the wall where all might read it, declaring that any laborer known to swear while about his work should be dismissed.

SPEAKING BOLDLY FOR CHRIST, vs. 11, 12. Christ foresaw that his followers, after his death, would come into conflict with the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, for the vital religion which he taught was utterly opposed to the dead formalism into which Judaism had fallen and the selfish hierarchy who controlled it. When this should happen, and his followers had to make their defence, he bade them be not anxious, for the Holy Spirit would teach them what to say.

Our Lord was eager that his followers should be bold, though sometimes he cautioned them not to bring down the rulers upon them by premature speech. At the very outset of his ministry his disciples had gone promptly to their friends and relatives and told them about Jesus (John 1: 40-46). When Christ healed the Gadarene demoniac, he bade him tell all his friends about it (Mark 5: 19, 20). Immediately after the resurrection the disciples began to preach in open defiance of the authorities (Acts 4: 18-20). Paul's entire missionary work was a long obedience to Christ's command of courageous utterance. The command is for every least disciple to-day, when ridicule or bullying or sneers attempt to prevent our speaking out for Jesus Christ.

"Every human life that fails to hear its message and learn its lesson, or fails to speak it out, keeping it locked in the silence of the heart, leaves this earth a little poorer." — *J. R. Miller*.

"You never can tell when God will take a little word you may drop, like an arrow shot at a venture, and cause it to strike some hearer between the joints of the harness and bring him down. Therefore, let no opportunity slip for speaking a word for Christ." — *A. F. Schauffer*.

WITNESS-BEARING ON MISSION FIELDS. "Millions of unconverted heathen have passed into eternity, to most of whom the gospel was never preached at all. All were entitled to it; to all Christ commanded that it should be preached. What shall we say to the Master when he asks us about them?" — *J. Hudson Taylor*.

Once a Chinese asked a statesman who represented the United States in China, "What right have you Christians to come over here to China and talk with these people about your religion?" The diplomat answered wisely, "The right to give others something that is too good to keep."

A boy named Baldwin in North Carolina planned to be a foreign missionary, but was prevented by a sister's illness. His attention was turned to the mill children, condemned to poverty and ignorance all their days. Assailed by ridicule, he collected money enough to set up a school for them, together with a small cotton mill where they could work half the time. Thus grew up Piedmont Institute, which is a great power for good in the State, making Mr. Baldwin in the truest sense a missionary though he never reached the foreign field.

ACTS 1:1. The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3. To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4. And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saieth he*, ye have heard of me.

5. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7. And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

"All through our little lives the divine cry is ringing, 'Who will go for us?' God respects us too much to compel us. He will not force us to go. But where the need is so great, and the cry is so plain, let no man wait for any clearer call; let him respond at once, in the simple, surrendering words of the great prophet, 'Behold me, send me.'"—*John E. McFadyen*.

II. **POWER FOR WITNESS-BEARING**, Acts 1:1-8. Luke, Paul's "beloved physician," wrote the Acts, and his **former treatise** was the Gospel of Luke. Theophilus, to whom both books were dedicated, may have been a high Greek official, but it is not known where he lived. This "former treatise" concerns the acts of Jesus in the flesh; the present treatise concerns the continued acts of our Lord through the apostles, to whom Christ had **given commandment** to go into all the world and tell men about him and the salvation he offered.

WAITING FOR ORDERS, vs. 3-5. The apostles were educated, during the forty days after Christ's resurrection, by the many appearances of our Lord, each teaching them a different and important lesson **concerning the kingdom of God**, and each adding to the incontrovertible proof that he who had died on the cross was now alive again. These teachings and proofs they would use over and over in their gospel work. Another important element in their education for their great work was just the waiting in Jerusalem which Christ commanded, for it is hard to wait, especially when large tasks are before one and a burning zeal is in one's heart. This waiting, however, had a glorious goal before it, **the promise of the Father** through his Son (John 14:16, 26; 15:26) that they should **be baptized with the Holy Ghost**.

"I love to think that every born man is sent into the world with something to tell. This is what makes of any man a prophet, being filled with a story too big for his own soul to house."—*Charles H. Parkhurst*. The true Christian is the one who waits when God says wait, goes when God says go, speaks and acts when God commands.

"How sad 'twould be to see a master's hand
Strike glorious notes upon a voiceless lute;
But oh! what pain, when, at God's own command,
A heartstring thrills with kindness, but is mute."—*John Boyle O'Reilly*.

"**YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER**," vs. 6-8. The apostles, **when they were come together** on the Mount of Olives just before the ascension, **asked him**, being unable to get out of their minds the material, earthly sovereignty which Christ had so often repudiated, **Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?** They had no higher thoughts than the driving of the Romans from Palestine.

Our Lord did not stop to correct this error once more, but merely told them that it is not for men to know the time that God has set for the events of his providential ordering. They need not bother their heads about such matters; a far more important matter for each of them was the coming of the Holy Spirit into their lives, bringing them power to do his will, and bear witness to Christ, first in Jerusalem,

8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

then widening out through all Judea, then extending the gospel to Samaria, and finally **unto the uttermost part of the earth**. This saying of Christ's is the outline of the book of Acts and the programme of Christianity, a programme not even yet completed. It points the way to the best thing that can come into any life, the reception of the Holy Spirit enabling one to be a witness to Jesus Christ.

"It may be glorious to write
Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
High souls, like those far stars that come in sight
Once in a century;
But better far it is to speak
One simple word, which now and then
Shall waken their free nature in the weak
And friendless sons of men."—James Russell Lowell.

THE SPIRIT'S POWER ON MISSION FIELDS. The Holy Spirit is given to men in answer to prayer. "Those sent out in prayer will be likeliest to return in triumph."—Charles S. Robinson.

The Holy Spirit has proved millions of times on mission fields his power to transform lives. Once Dr. Guthrie, illustrating this in a public meeting, took up a sheet of white paper. "Do you know what this pure white paper came from?" he cried. "It was made from the foulest Russian rags. So these, our sons and our daughters, were dead and are alive again; they were lost and are found."

"A missionary in China, while travelling in the country, saw the cleanest and tidiest house she had come across in China. She praised the housekeeper for her tidiness. This was the answer: 'My Father God and Jesus Christ are always coming and going in and out of here. Would it do to have the house other than tidy?'"

"A Korean Christian told in a prayer meeting how he conquered anger, his besetting sin. The missionary had explained to him that every burst of anger pierced the heart of Jesus. 'So I hung a picture of the Lord Jesus on my wall,' he said, 'and every time I lost my temper I put a thorn on that picture. The picture was soon covered with thorns. A great love came over me that he should suffer because of my temper, and now he gives me grace in temptation. I say, "Not I, but Christ within me," and his sweetness comes instead of my bad temper.'"—Forward.

"Lord, I beseech that I may teach
With love like thine to me,
And so, with wise and loving speech,
Bring many a heart to thee."—Rev. Thomas Davis.

III. OTHER BIBLE TEACHINGS ABOUT SPEECH. *The Power of the Tongue for Evil*, Jas. 3:1-8. In this famous and eloquent passage James likens the tongue to a bridle, which turns the horse as it will; to a ship's rudder, which the mighty ship obeys; to a little flame, which kindles a great conflagration; to a poison, which kills the body. Every beast has been tamed, but the tongue has never been tamed by man; only God can tame it. "Give not thy tongue too great liberty, lest it take thee prisoner. A word unspoken is like a sword in the scabbard, thine; if vented, thy sword is another's."—Quarles. "Few of us have any conception of the mischief wrought by even Christian tongues. Yet it is after all the heart that controls the tongue. The bitter word about our neighbor is almost always preceded by the bitter thought about him."—G. H. C. Macgregor.



Ship's Rudder.

Illustration. On the advice of her pastor a woman once adopted a shrewd remedy for an ugly-spoken neighbor who often visited her to provoke a quarrel. When the neighbor next came the woman had a pair of tongs in her hand. At the first hateful word, snap! went the tongs. Another volley. Snap! Another still. Snap!

"Why don't you say something?" she asked angrily. Snap! "Speak!" she cried. Snap! "Do speak! If you don't speak, I shall split!" and away she went. After that she let the tongs do all the snapping for her tongue.

"The boneless tongue, so small and weak,
Can crush and kill," declares the Greek.

"The tongue destroys a greater horde,"
The Turk asserts, "than does the sword."

"The Persian proverb wisely saith,
'A lengthy tongue — an early death.'"

"Or sometimes takes this form instead,
'Don't let your tongue cut off your head.'"

"The tongue can speak a word whose speed,"
Say the Chinese, "outstrips the steed."

"While Arab sages this impart,
'The tongue's great storehouse is the heart.'"

"From Hebrew wit the maxim sprung,
'Though feet should slip, ne'er let the tongue.'"

"The sacred writer crowns the whole,
'Who keeps his tongue doth keep his soul.'"

The Power of the Tongue for Good, Jas. 3 : 9-18. But this same tongue, so powerful for evil, is yet, as James reminds us, equally powerful for good. It curses, but it also blesses. It is contentious, but also peaceable. It is hypocritical, but also honest. It is foul, but also pure. And when it is good, how good it is!

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in network of silver" (Prov. 25 : 11). "Kind words produce their own image in men's souls, and a beautiful image it is." — *Pascal*.

Illustration. Xanthus, Æsop's master, ordered the wise slave to prepare a feast of the best things in the market, but sat down to a meal all of tongues, cooked in many styles. Æsop defended himself by showing all the good of which the tongue is capable, ordering society, governing men, building cities, persuading assemblies. "Well then," said Xanthus, "give us to-morrow a meal of the worst things." On the morrow, another feast of tongues! "For the tongue," said Æsop, the organ of error, lies, calumny, blasphemy."



Horses with Bits and Bridles.

"is also the worst thing, causing strife, lawsuits, wars, the organ of error, lies, calumny, blasphemy."

"If all of the kind words never said
Could bloom into flowers and spread and shed
Their sweetness out on the common air,
The breath of heaven would be everywhere."

Speech in Worship, Ps. 145 : 1-21. The highest use of speech is in prayer to God and praise of God. "My mouth shall speak the praise of Jehovah" — that is as noble a decision as man can form. "Pray without ceasing," said Paul, "in everything give thanks" (1 Thess. 5 : 17, 18); that is, so fill your minds with prayer and praise that at any time those supreme emotions will leap spontaneously into words. As speech is the chief of human attributes, so worship is the climax of speech. We can make this thought practical by earnest and regular use of private devotions and attendance on the services of God's house.

Controlled Speech, Jas. 1 : 19, 26. "Let every man," James urges, "be swift to hear, slow to speak," for his religion is an empty thing if he does not bridle his tongue,

keeping it under strict control. Especially is this necessary where others are involved. "When you hear an ill report about any one, half and quarter it, and then say nothing about the rest." — *Spurgeon*.

"Think all you speak, but speak not all you think :
Thoughts are your own ; your words are so no more.
Where Wisdom steers, wind cannot make you sink :
Lips never err when she doth keep the door."

"He is the king, I teach, —
Though born of the throne or the sod, —
Who doth but honor his speech
As if it were said by his God." — *Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward*.

Courteous Speech, Col. 4 : 6. Paul, one of the most courteous and tactful of men, advises us, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt," that is, both winsome and wise, for courtesy is never weak. Many seem to think that sarcasm proves brilliancy. On the contrary, "sarcasm is the natural language of the devil." — *Carlyle*. "No one was ever corrected by a sarcasm ; crushed, perhaps, if the sarcasm was clever enough, but drawn nearer to God, never." — *F. W. Faber*. "The best conversationalist I ever knew," said a wise woman, "never made any deep or memorable speeches herself that I can recall, but she had a perfect genius for switching other people's trains of conversation on to safe tracks." Collisions, in speech as on the railroad, are immensely destructive ; moreover, they keep us from getting on, from making progress. The courteous tongue is the achieving tongue.

Convincing Speech, 1 Pet. 3 : 15. Peter, the ever-ready, urges all Christians to be always ready to give a reason for their Christian hope and faith. The Christian is always like a lawyer before a jury. "Look with a single eye to the verdict," advised the great lawyer, Rufus Choate. The Christian is like an orator before an audience. "I have found," says the consummate orator, Bryan, "that there is nothing which the average mind follows with more attention than logical statement." The Christian has in his speech a great end in view, to which he bends all his resources. "It was not the object of Demosthenes to make the Athenians cry out, 'What a splendid speaker !' but to make them say, 'Let us march against Philip !'" One of the great aims of the Sunday school is to furnish us with arguments for Christianity that will convince the reason and so influence the life.

Instructive Speech, John 21 : 15-17. Peter was told thrice to feed and tend the Master's sheep and lambs ; the message is to all Christians as well as to Peter. Every true Christian knows something that non-Christians do not know. Every Bible reader knows much that lives without the Bible do not know. Every adult knows much that children do not know and should know. Every one can be a teacher, and one of the chief uses of speech is to teach. The trouble with us is that we do not think enough to prepare ourselves for teaching. "Meditation leads to conversation. It would be easier for us to 'talk of his doings' if we thought more about them." — *G. B. F. Hallock*.

Illustration. Our Christian teaching should be very simple and to the point. When Phillips Brooks was in Harvard he wrote a very elaborate introduction to an essay which he handed to Professor Child. The wise professor handed it back with only one criticism, written at the end of the flourishing introduction : "Begin here."

Idle Speech, Matt. 12 : 34-37. Christ said that we are to give account in the day of judgment for every idle word that we have spoken. This does not mean, of course, that we are always to speak solemnly, instructively, with careful deliberation. It does not forbid gay speech, merry talk. But it does forbid foolish, silly talk, empty gossip, heartless slander, and it calls upon us, even in our lightest moments, to remember "whose we are and whom we serve." "Vile words should not be spoken in jest or earnest." — *George Washington*. "Remember that every word you utter wings its way to the throne of God, and is to affect the condition of your soul forever." — *Todd*.

Illustrations. Probably the most cutting thing Lincoln ever said was his remark about a very loquacious man, "This person can compress the most words into the smallest ideas of all men I ever met."

A certain family kept a "Slander Book" in which was entered every slanderous utterance of the household. At first there were many, but soon they ceased altogether in that home.

Bishop Latimer, on trial for heresy, was speaking quite freely when he chanced to hear the scratching of a pen behind a curtain where a clerk was taking down every word he said. At once he became more guarded in his speech. Thus are all our words taken down, to weigh in our final judgment.

Warning Speech. 1 Thess. 5:11, 14. One use of Christian speech, as Paul says, is to "admonish the disorderly." Praise is better than blame, encouragement better than warning, but sometimes blame and warning are necessary medicine, and the Good Physician himself did not hesitate to give bitter doses when they were needed.

Illustration. A certain preacher, finding his congregation going to sleep, backed off in his pulpit and kicked the light reading desk into the front pews. The congregation promptly woke up, and he had a full church the next Sunday. Vigorous methods are often necessary in dealing with sinners. They must not be allowed to go to sleep.

Happy Speech. 1 Thess. 5:16, 18. "Rejoice always," said Paul; "in everything give thanks." Paul could do that, because he was so busy doing the will of God, and nothing makes one so happy as that, or so grateful. If we obey God's laws of speech in other respects, we shall have no difficulty in obeying this rule that requires our speech to be full of joy and thanksgiving. And the essence of all the rules of speech is love.

"Loving words will cost us little,
As along through life we go;
Let us, then, make others happy —
If you love them, tell them so." — Eben E. Rexford.

LESSON IX. — September 1.

CHRISTIAN GIVING. — Luke 6:30-38; 21:1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.* — ACTS 20:35.

Devotional Reading: 2 Cor. 9:6-15.

Additional Material for Teachers: 1 Chron. 29:1-5; Ezra 1:2-4; Luke 16:9; Rom. 12:8; 2 Cor. 9:6-15; Heb. 13:16.

Primary and Junior Lesson Material: Ex. 35:20-29.

Primary Memory Verse: It is more blessed to give than to receive. — Acts 20:35.

Story Material: Ex. 35:20-29; 1 Kings 17:8-16; John 12:3-7.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: Our Gifts for the Kingdom: What Shall They Be?

Additional Material: Ex. 25:2; Deut. 16:17; Prov. 3:9, 10; 11:24, 25; Eccl. 11:1, 2; Mal. 3:10-12; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8:7-15; 1 Tim. 6:17-19.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The primary department may base its lesson upon the Bible stories of giving, especially the gifts for the tabernacle and temple, Mary's gift, and the widow's mite. The older pupils will study all the Bible passages on giving they have time for, each pupil having made a little collection for himself. Aim to make the lesson in all grades very practical, urging systematic, proportionate, and generous giving. In many classes it would be well to give each pupil a blank book in which to record on opposite pages their receipts, and their gifts to religious causes.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Luke. Books on giving, such as "The Sacred Tenth," by Lansdell. Tracts by "Layman" of Chicago. Chapter on "Money and the Kingdom" in *Our Country*, by Josiah Strong. Poems and hymns on giving, such as "It Is More Blessed," by Rose Terry Cooke; "The Secret Giver," by Harriet McEwen Kimball; Lowell's "Sir Launfal"; "Heavenly Treasure," by Saxe. "The New Testament Conception of the Disciple and His Money," a leaflet by Professor Bosworth. Publications of the Laymen's Missionary Movement.

LEARN BY HEART.

Acts 20:35; Luke 6:30, 38; Mal. 3:10.

THE ROUND TABLE.**FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.**

Old Testament models of giving.
 New Testament models of giving.
 The tithe as a standard of giving.
 The best system of giving.
 The rewards of giving.
 The problem of giving in our churches.
 How Christ would have us give.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place.—The precepts of Luke 6 belong to the "Sermon on the Plain," spoken in the early days of Christ's ministry, largely parallel to the "Sermon on the Mount," and, as many believe, another report of the same discourse. It may have been spoken on the flat space between the two peaks of the hill called Kurn Hattin. The incident of the widow's mite took place in

the temple, during the last week before the crucifixion.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Our Gifts for the Kingdom :
 What Shall They Be ?

I. THE MEASURE OF GIVING, Luke 6 :

30-34.

Gifts for tabernacle and temple.
 The tithe.
 Mary's ointment.
 Systematic giving.
 Proportionate giving.
 Generous giving.

II. THE REWARDS OF GIVING, Luke 6 :

35-38.

Blessedness.
 Gratitude.
 Prosperity.
 God's approval.
 Eternal joy.

III. GIVING THAT MEANS SACRIFICE, Luke 21 : 1-4.

The unspeakable Gift.

LUKE 6:30. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again.

31. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

I. THE MEASURE OF GIVING, Luke 6:30-34. These verses belong to the early ministry of our Lord, the section in which Luke, after describing his work amid the sick and sinful, turns to his teaching and gives specimens of his wise sayings. In that land of great poverty and abominable oppression of the poor the matter of giving came up early in any discussion of noble character.

30. Give to every man that asketh of thee. "Literally, *be giving*, implying a habit, not an instant act. Here we have a broad, general principle of liberality safely left to the common sense of mankind, Deut. 15:7-9. The *spirit* of our Lord's precept is now best fulfilled by *not* giving to every man that asks, because in the altered circumstances of the age such indiscriminate almsgiving would be only a check to industry, and a premium on imposture, degradation, and vice. By 'giving' our Lord meant 'conferring a boon'; but mere careless giving now, so far from conferring a boon, perpetuates a curse and inflicts an injury. The *spirit* of the precept is large-handed but thoughtful charity. Love must sometimes violate the letter as the only possible way of observing the spirit (Matt. 15:26; 20:23)." — *Cambridge Bible*.

Illustration. A woman, hurrying across Boston Common, was accosted by a nine-year-old boy. "Please give me some money to get something to eat," he whined. The woman mimicked his whine: "No, I won't give you any money to get something to eat." Instead she paid him to carry her umbrella to her office, and then loaned him twenty cents to invest in papers, he signing a contract to pay her as soon as he had cleared the amount. He came back in half an hour, radiant, with the twenty cents. The next day he cleared a dollar and a half. Thus the boy was started on the road to a self-respecting and prosperous manhood.

31. As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. This is the Golden Rule, so called because Christ said it was the summary of the law and the prophets (Matt. 7:12). It is easy enough, Christ went on to say, to love those that love us, do good to those that do good to us, lend to those from whom we expect to receive; sinners do as much as that, and Christians should do more, giving freely to all in need, just as they would wish others to give to them if they were in need. The Iron Rule of the world is, Do to others as they do to you; Christ's

32. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34. And if ye lend to *them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

rule is infinitely higher: Treat others as you want them to treat you, love others as yourself.

OLD TESTAMENT MEASURES OF GIVING. *Gifts for the Tabernacle*, Ex. 25:2; 35:20-29. When Moses built the "tent of meeting" in the wilderness, he received an offering "of every man whose heart made him willing." Willingness, — that was a noble measure of giving, and the result was a glorious offering — much golden jewelry, much silver, brass, and acacia wood, spice and oil, precious stones, rich linen, the skins of rams and goats and seals. Much of the "spoil" of the Egyptians, their too-late payment for the Israelites' long toils, must have gone into the tabernacle.



Offerings of Gold and Silver.

All gifts to the church are only paying back part of our debt to God. "God's inalienable ownership implies man's undeniable stewardship." — A. T. Pierson. "You are God's property, and therefore everything you hold is his property. If we send people to jail for a personal use of trust funds, I know of

nothing that warrants our supposing that God has any less feeling about embezzlement than we have." — Charles H. Parkhurst. A stingy man is an embezzler.

Gifts for the Temple, 1 Chron. 29:1-5; Ezra 1:2-4. David's preparations for the building of the temple were made "with all his might," "because he had set his affection on the house of his God." He was not allowed to build the sacred edifice himself, but he filled the heart of his son Solomon with a zeal equal to his own. The result was one of the wonders of the world. The second temple, built in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, was not so splendid, for the people were very poor, but it represented an equal consecration and heroic courage. Giving to God's house and to his work has brought out such heroism all through the ages.

Illustration. When Livingstone went to Africa an aged Scotch woman, Mrs. MacRobert, gave him \$150, all she had saved, and asked him to save his strength by hiring a servant with it. With that money he hired his faithful Sebalwe, who, when a lion had the great missionary down and had already crushed the bones of his left arm, drew off the lion's attention to himself and so saved his master. The guns of other companions killed the lion just in time to save Sebalwe.

"A contribution-box should always be one of the attractions of the Lord's house. We ought to go to church to give as well as to get." — Henry Clay Trumbull.

"Hands that ope but to receive
Empty close; they only live
Richly who can richly give." — Whittier.

The Tithe, Mal. 3:10. "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse" was God's command through Malachi. Many thousands of Christians obey that command to-day, gladly setting aside to the Lord's use one-tenth of their incomes, not because they believe themselves still under the Mosaic laws, but because they consider the tenth a fair minimum proportion to serve as a basis of giving. "The Tenth Legion" of the Christian Endeavor Society is an organization of tithe-payers numbering at the time of writing 41,285 members. These all testify to the great joy of having a definite religious treasury, always full.

It is estimated that the average income of the Christians of the world, including women and children, is fifty-five cents a day; call it fifty cents, and the tithe is

five cents a day or eighteen dollars a member each year — a sum enormously in excess of what is given. Bishop McCabe figured that tithing would increase the religious giving of the Methodist Church from \$24,000,000 a year to \$80,000,000. A single sermon on tithing preached once in Adelaide, Australia, resulted in an aggregate of half a million dollars for Christianity. "We all need some fixed standard of measurement as a base line, at least, below which we ought not to fall, and above which we may rise according to our privilege and desire, and the extraordinary demands that may be made upon us. Tithing would finance the kingdom of God."

— *The Christian Evangelist.*

Illustration. Just as we set apart one-seventh of our time as sacred to God, and think that spending Sunday for him helps us to live for him all the other days of the week, so setting apart one-tenth of our income for God helps us to use all our money as he would have us use it.

NEW TESTAMENT MEASURES OF GIVING. *Mary's Ointment*, John 12:3-7. The lavish, enthusiastic giving which Jesus approves is illustrated conspicuously by Mary's breaking of the alabaster flask and outpouring of the costly spikenard. Judas would have had the money "for the poor," but Christ said it was better given to himself, the uncalculating gift of love. "Love is the greatest thing that God can give us, for himself is love; and it is the greatest thing we can give to God, for it will also give ourselves, and carry with it all that is ours." — *Jeremy Taylor.*

"Be kingly prodigal of time, for use
In God's sweet service. 'Tis a jealous cruse
That holds thy life from love's anointing wide.
Shatter it grandly. See! an eager tide
Of fragrance and of healing ministries,
Wrought on the Lord if on 'the least of these';
And see! the ragged edge, the flakes fallen down,
Form, at his word, thine alabaster crown!" — *Amos R. Wells.*

"Give as you would if an angel
Awaited your gift at the door;
Give as you would if to-morrow
Found you where waiting was o'er;
Give as you would to the Master
If you met his searching look;
Give as you would of your substance
If his hand your offering took."

Illustration. The Baroness Reinelt, of Trieste, whose husband died leaving a fortune of 20,000,000 florins for benevolent purposes, went to a bazaar and was offered a pink by a lady in charge of a stall. "How much may I pay for this flower?" she asked. "There are no limits to your generosity, Baroness," was the reply. "Well, then," she said, "I will pay enough for it to cover the arrears of the Music Exhibition." The amount required for this purpose was 95,000 florins, or \$40,000.

Systematic Giving, 1 Cor. 16:1, 2. Paul bade the Christians of Corinth to make an offering regularly every Sunday "as each one may prosper." Habitual giving is a most valuable habit, and once a week is a natural interval for giving. If we do not adopt a regular system of giving, we are not likely to give at all. "In nothing is loyalty to truth more clearly tested and obedience to Christ more surely indicated than in the use one makes of the treasured energy that comes into his possession in the form of money." — *Rev. S. A. Dyke.* "The custom of remembering the Lord's work throughout the entire world each week will naturally and logically broaden and deepen our interests, sympathies, and prayers for world-wide missions." — *Rev. C. F. Ralston.*

"A penny a week and a prayer,
Freely and heartily given, —
The treasures of earth will all melt away;
This is treasure laid up in heaven."

Illustration. Brother John Smith in account with his Master, the Lord of the whole earth.

DR.

To 10 showers of rain on his fields at \$25 per shower	\$250.00
2 extra showers at a critical period, \$50 each	100.00
60 days of sunshine at \$5 each	300.00
	<u>\$650.00</u>

Per contra:

CR.

By given for pastor's salary	\$10.00
Home missions	.25
Foreign missions	.10
	\$10.35

Proportionate Giving. "Every man shall give as he is able," said Moses (Deut. 16: 17); "according as a man hath," said Paul (2 Cor. 8: 7-15). It is not enough to give systematically — "a penny a week and a prayer" would be systematic, but it would be only farcical if it measured a rich man's gifts. "Every man according to his ability." Not every man according to his mood, or fancy, not every man according to other people's giving or other people's ability, but every man according to his ability. How well cared for the poor brethren would be if this were the recognized standard of giving in the church to-day." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*. "The young ought to begin life right by giving to God a portion of their earnings, however small." — *S. S. Waltz, D.D.* When Rockefeller's income was only \$50 for three months he made regular weekly gifts to religious causes.

"'Tis wisdom's law, the perfect code,
By love inspired:
Of him on whom much is bestowed
Is much required."

Illustrations. A Hindu mother had two little boys, twins, and one was blind. She thought the god she worshipped must be angry with her and must be propitiated, so one day she was seen with only one babe in her arms, having thrown the other into the Ganges. And the one she was carrying was blind. In answer to an inquirer she said, "Yes, of course, I gave the best!"

A hundred years ago a benevolent English merchant, Samuel Thornton, had just made out a generous check for a good cause when a messenger arrived with news that one of his most valuable vessels had been wrecked off the coast of China. Mr. Thornton at once asked to have his check back and wrote one for twice the original sum. "My loss," he explained, "reminded me how uncertain is wealth, and that I must make the best use of my money while I have it."

Generous Giving, Rom. 12: 8. "He that giveth, let him do it with liberality," Paul urged the Romans in this famous chapter. Systematic giving is not enough; ten cents a month for a millionaire would be systematic. Proportionate giving is not enough; a cent for every hundred dollars of income would be proportionate. What is needed is a systematic, *generous* proportion. "God loveth a cheerful giver," Paul wrote to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 9: 7), using a word (*hilaron*) which has been translated into our *hilarious*. "God loveth such a giver. What an inheritance! What a baptism! Such a man lives in the love of the Almighty." — *J. H. Jowett*. "I am so impressed with the importance that God attaches to sweet voluntariness that I am often tempted to resolve never to beg a cent for God again, but rather spend my energy in getting Christians spiritualized, assured that they will certainly become liberalized." — *A. J. Gordon*.

"Frankincense, myrrh, the Magi gave and golden coins like rain,
But they gave not as the heathen to receive as much again;
And in their hearts' hilarity they found it bliss to give —
A bliss beyond the blessedness of such as but receive." — *W. C. McClelland*.

Illustrations. For the first ten years of this century the recorded American gifts of large sums for benevolent purposes aggregated \$986,000,000; the gifts for the second decade will largely exceed even that stupendous sum. During the first few months of the European war the United States gave to Belgian relief alone more than \$14,000,000. During 1914 alone Americans gave to educational and charitable institutions the vast amount of \$315,000,000 — one-third of what was given in the first decade of the century.

"In ten years eleven of the Protestant communions of the United States have raised their gifts to home missions from \$12,065,814 to \$18,693,789, a gain of fifty-four per cent. During the same period they have increased their gifts to foreign missions from \$5,931,653 to \$11,098,517, a gain of eighty-seven per cent. Moreover this great gain has been accomplished not at the cost of work in the home churches, since the gain in home expenses has been thirty-six per cent for the same years." — *Rev. Cornelius H. Patton, D.D.*

35. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38. Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

A farmer went to hear John Wesley preach about money. Wesley's first sermon head was, "Get all you can." "Fine!" whispered the farmer to his neighbor. The second head was "Save all you can." "Better still!" the farmer whispered. The third head followed: "Give all you can." "Oh, dear!" groaned the farmer; "he has gone and spoiled it all."

A smart young fellow said to an aged minister, "I'll give you this five dollar bill for the cause you pleaded for on Sunday, just for fun." "Just for fun!" the old man exclaimed; "why that is just as it should be, for the Bible says the Lord loves a hilarious giver."

An invalid was talking about the war and the resultant needs. "I lay out at the beginning of the year my chief gifts to standard causes," she said, "and pay them as soon as I can. Then I care for extras as they come up during the year. I am so glad I made the most important gifts early this year, for the war has cut off my income." — *Rev. Emory W. Hunt, D.D.*

II. THE REWARDS OF GIVING, Luke 6:35-38. 35. Lend, hoping for nothing again (R. V., "never despairing"). David also commends the man who does not take interest on his loans (Ps. 15:5). The R. V. means, "Give to the most hopeless cases." "Love hopeth all things." And your reward shall be great, namely, sonship of God himself, since you have shown the Godlike quality of universal lovingkindness.

36. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful, especially toward the evil, who most need mercy.

"It is an attribute to God himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice." — *Shakespeare.*

37. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged. This does not mean that we are not to form an opinion regarding others, since otherwise we could not help them; but it is not to be a censorious opinion.

38. Give, and it shall be given unto you. This is not the highest motive, but it is a legitimate motive, and one much needed by our frail humanity. Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. Christ was thinking of a merchant pouring grain into a measure, and heaping it up high. Shall men give into your bosom. The ancients had no pockets, but carried things in a deep fold of the robe above the girdle. With the same measure that ye mete (measure) withal it shall be measured to you again. This is the rule of payment for generosity, — "measure for measure," not necessarily the same in kind, but the same in degree, in fulness.



"Good Measure Pressed Down."

OTHER BIBLE PROMISES TO GIVERS. *The Giver's Blessedness*, Acts 20:35. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This is a precious saying of our Lord's that is not recorded in the Gospels. Every one counts it blessed to receive; what

we need to learn is to put giving even above that blessing. "In giving a man receives more than he gives, and the more in proportion to the worth of the thing given." — *George Macdonald*. "Blessings which tarry long with the receiver become stagnant. We are filled that we may fill others." — *Zion's Herald*.

"That man may last, but never lives,
Who much receives, but never gives;
Whom none can love, whom none can thank,
Creation's blot, creation's blank." — *Thomas Gibbons*.

The Giver's Patience, Eccl. 11:1, 2. We are told to cast our bread upon the waters, for we shall find it "after many days." "Never be afraid of giving up your best, and God will give you *his* better." — *James Hinton*.

"Just take the waste
You cannot taste
To some poor soul in sorrow.
I'm quite inclined
To think you'll find
Your stock increased to-morrow." — *John Kendrick Bangs*.

Illustration. The cheery mother of Louisa M. Alcott used to say, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days it will come back buttered." The sage father of Miss Alcott was asked one snowy Saturday night to spare some wood for a poor family with a sick baby. He generously sent half of his scanty stock. A little later in the evening the farmer who usually supplied the Alcotts knocked at the door and told them he had started for Boston with a load of wood but the drifts were so bad he would like to drop the wood there, and they need not hurry to pay for it. Thus the promise of Eccl. 11:1 was fulfilled.

The Ever-full Cruse, 1 Kings 17:8-16. The widow of Zarephath was a heroic giver. She gave her all to Elijah, when not only her own life, but her son's life also, was dependent on it. The reward was a jar of meal and a cruse of oil kept miraculously full through all the famine. "During a long life I have proved that not one kind word ever spoken, not one kind deed ever done, but sooner or later returns to bless the giver." — *Lord Shaftesbury*. "We take God's gifts most completely when we realize that he sends them to us for the benefit of other men who stand beyond us needing them." — *Phillips Brooks*.

"For 'tis the Father spreads the pure repast,
Who, while we eat, renews the ready store,
Which at his bounteous board must ever last;
And, as the more we to his children lend,
The more to us doth of his bounty send." — *Jones Very*.

The Giver's Prosperity. Paul writes (2 Cor. 9:6, 8-14), "He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Solomon assures us that if a man honors God with his substance, his "barns shall be filled with plenty" (Prov. 3:9, 10); that "the liberal soul shall be made fat" (Prov. 11:24, 25). Almost the last word of the Old Testament (Mal. 3:10-12) is a promise to generous givers, that God "will open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." "What is the use of praying without giving? 'Bringing the tithes into the storehouse' is the condition of the opened 'windows of heaven.'" — *Robert E. Speer*.

"Who shuts his hand hath lost his gold;
Who opens it, hath it twice told." — *George Herbert*.

"Letting go is twice possessing;
Would you double every blessing,
Pass it on."

"What I spent I had;
What I kept I lost;
What I gave I have." — *Old Epitaph*.

Illustration. Rabindranath Tagore, the famous Hindu poet, tells the story of a beggar who had begged from door to door when he saw the King of kings approach in a golden chariot. The chariot stopped and the King descended with a smile. The beggar felt that the luck of his life had come at last; but what was his surprise when the King held out his hand, asking, "What hast thou to give to me?" Confused, undecided, the beggar took from his wallet slowly the least little grain of corn and gave it to the King. At the end of the day he found when he emptied his bag

LUKE 21 : 1. And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

that it contained a least little grain of gold. Then he wept bitterly, and wished he had had the heart to give the King his all.

Givers Please God, Heb. 13 : 16. "To do good and to communicate forget not : for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." "God's great purpose in wanting men to give to him is that he may be enabled to give more abundantly to them." — *Christian Age*.

"Largely thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely thy gifts should be restored;
Freely thou givest, and thy word
Is, 'Freely give.'
He only who forgets to hoard
Has learned to live." — *Keble*.

Illustration. Queen Victoria, out driving in her plain way, was overtaken by a rainstorm, and stepped into a cottage to borrow an umbrella. The woman looked at the simply dressed Queen and gave her an old, shabby umbrella, not her Sunday best. The next day a messenger returned the shabby umbrella with a handsome sum of money. Then she learned that the Queen had been the borrower, and grieved, too late, because she had not given her best.

The Giver's Eternal Joy. Christ bids us (Luke 16 : 9) to "make friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness (money); that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles." Paul (1 Tim. 6 : 17-19) bade the rich be "ready to distribute, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come." "We are not at all sure that we shall have any possessions, anything of our own, in the future life, anything, consequently, to give away. Perhaps it will all belong to all. So let us have enough of giving while we can, and enjoy the best part of possession." — *Jean Ingelow*.

"For the treasure freely given
Is the treasure that we hoard,
Since the angels keep, in heaven,
What is lent unto the Lord!" — *John G. Saxe*.

"A little brown penny, worn and old,
Dropped in the box by a dimpled hand;
A little brown penny, a childish prayer,
Sent far away to a heathen land.

"And who can tell of the blessings that came
To the little child when Christ looked down?
Or how the penny, worn and old,
In heaven will change to a golden crown?" — *Onward*.

Illustrations. "How many surprises there will be in the age to come, when all the lines of spiritual influence are revealed that have contributed to the elevation of a man into the eternal life! Men from India, China, and Africa will say to you, 'You are my friend. Welcome here! You do not know me, but I have learned that it is due to sacrifices that you made, and money that you gave, that I ever heard the gospel. We are friends!'" — *Prof. Edward I. Bosworth*.

A rich lady dreamed that she was in heaven and saw a fine mansion being built. "Whom is that for?" she asked her guide. "For your gardener." "But he lives in the tiniest cottage on earth, with barely room enough for his family. He might live better if he did not give away so much to the miserable poor folks." Further on she saw a tiny cottage being built. "And whom is that for?" she asked. "That is for you." "But I have lived in a mansion on earth. I should not know how to live in a cottage." The answer was full of meaning: "The Master Builder is doing his best with the material that is being sent up." Then she awoke, resolving to lay up treasure in heaven.

III. GIVING THAT MEANS SACRIFICE, Luke 21 : 1-4. It was in the last week of the Saviour's life. He was sitting in the temple, in the Court of the Women, his eyes downcast, his spirit sad with the thought of all that was soon to come into his life. Near by were thirteen money chests, ready for offerings. They bore various inscriptions, and had trumpet-shaped openings for the receipt of coins. Looking up from his mournful musings, Christ saw rich men coming up and ostentatiously casting into the boxes large gifts (Mark 12 : 41). As our Lord was still further saddened by this exhibition of pride, so contrary to Talmudic law and to

2. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.
3. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:
4. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

his own teachings (Matt. 6:3, 4, 18), he perceived a poor widow approaching quietly, almost shamefacedly, evidently avoiding observation. She put into the treasury **two mites**, "which make a farthing" (Mark 12:42). "The *lepton* or *prutah* was the smallest of coins, and the Rabbis did not allow any one to give less than two." —



The Widow's Mite.

Doré.

Cambridge Bible. Then Christ uttered the saying that has comforted and encouraged small givers ever since: **Of a truth I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than they all: for all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts; but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had** (R. V.).

THE WIDOW'S MITE, observe, was *all she had*. No one can apologize for a small gift by calling it "my mite" unless it is his entire income. "Mite boxes," with that understanding of the case, would need to be made larger than bushel baskets! "The true estimate of human actions is according to their *quality*, not according to their *quantity*."

Some one enumerates the seven ways of giving: the careless way, the impulsive way, the lazy way, the selfish way, the systematic way, the fair way, the heroic way. This last is "the self-sacrificing way, giving more than you can, giving till it hurts, and then giving till it does not hurt." — *Rev. A. B. Simpson*. The last is the way of the widow's mite.

Illustrations. The teacher of a girls' mission school in Africa paid the girls for doing work for her, so that they might have something of their own to give away for Christ's sake. Among them was a new pupil, such a wild and ignorant little heathen that the teacher did not try to explain to her what the other girls were doing. When the day for the gifts arrived each girl brought her piece of money and laid it down till the teacher thought all had given. But there stood the new scholar, hugging tightly a pitcher, the only thing she had in the world. She went to the table and put it among the other gifts; but before she turned away she kissed it.

When Cyrus Hamlin, the famous missionary to Turkey, was a small boy, his mother gave him seven cents to celebrate muster day. He was to buy gingerbread, buns, etc. "And perhaps, Cyrus," she said, "you will put a cent or two into the missionary contribution box on the common." As he trudged along he began to ask, "Shall I drop in one cent or two? I wish she had not said 'one or two.'" He decided on two. Then conscience said, "What! five cents for your stomach and two for the heathen?" So he said four for gingerbread and three for souls. Presently he turned it around, three for gingerbread and four for the heathen. When he came to the box he dumped in the whole seven, and from that time he determined to be a missionary.

"It is said that on a certain feast day all the people in a little Italian town were bidden to come to the great cathedral, march down the dim aisles, and lay upon the

altar a gift for the Lord; and to him who should offer the most acceptable gift heaven would grant a sign. The people came, and they bore in their hands costly spices, rare laces, vessels of gold, priceless garments, wonderful statues and pictures. They bore their gifts proudly and in deep expectancy, looking to see the sign; but as one after another reached out his hands over the altar rail to lay down the gift, lo! it disappeared. With terror-stricken faces they went back down the other long, dim aisle and out into the sunshine, hardly daring to look at each other. At last, late in the afternoon, there came a maiden, poorly clad, who looked at no one, and as the people gazed at her they could see nothing in her hands. She went slowly down to the altar and knelt there for a long time, while the curious crowd wondered; they saw her reach out both hands, which seemed to be empty, and lay them both upon the altar; she kept them there for a long time, but when she rose and came out into the sunshine her face wore a look of calm peace and great joy. Then the people looked back at the altar, where nothing had been, and there saw two beautiful pure white lilies, which had burst into bloom upon the altar and filled the cathedral with fragrance." — *Margaret Slattery*.

THE GREATEST GIFT, THE GREATEST SACRIFICE. The greatest sacrifice is that of "our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15). The greatest of all beings gave the greatest of all gifts, that of his only-begotten Son. Let all our giving be in gratitude for that Gift, and let the spirit of all our giving be the spirit of the Divine Giver.

LESSON X. — September 8.

CONQUERING EVIL. — 1 Kings 21:1-29; Ephesians 5:6-21.

(May be used with Temperance Applications.)

PRINT 1 Kings 21:11-20; Ephesians 5:11-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them.* — EPH. 5:11.

Devotional Reading: Rom. 12:21-13:10.

Additional Material for Teachers: Deut. 9:18; Ps. 94:16; Prov. 17:10; 25:12; Luke 4:13; 19:41-48; Rom. 7:14-8:14; 2 Tim. 4:2.

Primary and Junior Topic: Choosing the Right.

Primary Memory Verse: Depart from evil, and do good. — Ps. 34:14.

Junior Memory Verse: Dan. 1:8.

Story Material: Dan. 1:8-20.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: Temptations Resisted and Evil Overthrown in Christ's Strength.

Additional Material: Lev. 19:17; Ps. 139:19-24; Prov. 9:8; 15:5, 31, 32; 27:5, 6; Matt. 6:13; Luke 22:31, 32; John 17:15; Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Heb. 12:1-4.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The primary and junior teachers, basing their lesson on the story of Daniel, will apply it to the many choices of the right over the wrong in child life, at home and in school. Make a plea for pledge-signing and for the Junior society. The older classes have the broader theme of the evil in individuals and society. The principles of conquest are the same in both: if a man can rule

his spirit he can take a city. The subject widens out into a discussion of all present-day reforms, especially the temperance reform.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Bible conquerors of evil.

Why evil is only apparently strong.

Divine help in conquering temptation.

Present-day reforms of greatest importance.

How to abolish the saloon.

How to conquer temptation in our lives.

LEARN BY HEART.

Eph. 5: 11; 1 Cor. 9: 24-27; Heb. 12: 4.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place.—The events of First Kings 21 took place toward the end of Ahab's reign, about 854 B.C., in Jezreel, north of Samaria. The letter to the Ephesians was written by Paul during his first imprisonment in Rome.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on First Kings and Ephesians. Recent volumes on reforms, especially *The Drink Problem of To-day*, edited by Kelynack; *Alcohol: Its Influence on Mind and Body*, by Bowers; *The Anti-Alcohol Movement in Europe*, by Gordon; *Toward an Enduring Peace*, edited by Bourne; *Community Development*, by Farrington; *Sunday the World's Rest Day* (New York Sabbath Committee); *The New Chivalry—Health* (Southern Sociological Congress); *Help for the Tempted*, by Amos R. Wells.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Temptations Resisted and Evils Overthrown in Christ's Strength.

I. EVIL SEEMINGLY TRIUMPHANT,
1 Kings 21: 1-16.

Ahab's covetousness.
Jezebel's plot.
The murder of Naboth.

II. EVIL COURAGEOUSLY CONQUERED,
1 Kings 21: 17-29.

Elijah's commission.
Elijah's boldness.
Elijah's triumph.

III. HOW TO TRIUMPH OVER TEMPTATION
AND EVIL, Eph. 5: 11-18.

Victory by separation.
Victory by reproof.
Victory by thoughtfulness.
Victory by temperance.
Victory by God's help.
Victory by love.
Victory by prayer.
Victory by God's word.
Victory by sorrow.
Victory by boldness.
Victory by self-control.
Victory by determination.

I KINGS 21: 11. And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it *was* written in the letters which she had sent unto them;

12. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

I. EVIL SEEMINGLY TRIUMPHANT, 1 Kings 21: 1-16. Ahab was the seventh king of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, and reigned from 876 B.C. to 854 B.C. (Professor Skinner), or twenty-two years. Weak in his personal character, he married a heathen princess whose fierce strength of purpose was able to overmaster



Jezreel, the Summer Capital of Ahab.

his at every turn, the infamous Jezebel, daughter of the King of Zidon, who made her husband an idolater like herself. This royal pair had a summer palace at Jezreel on a spur of Mount Gilboa, looking westward toward Mount Carmel over the great plain of Jezreel. Near this palace was a vineyard belonging to a simple farmer named Naboth. Ahab wished to add it to the palace grounds and offered to pay Naboth in money or in a better vineyard. The Hebrews, however, were always reluctant to part with their ancestral lands, and especially to sell them outside their own kin. Naboth refused the king's proposal with horror, and Ahab knew that popular feeling would back up the farmer, so he went to his palace and sulked like

13. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, *even* against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

14. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

15. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

16. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

a little boy whose wishes had been thwarted. He flung himself on his bed, face to the wall, and even refused to eat.

Illustration. Ahab was like a "sick ship" described by *Forward*: "The 'Sea Call,' a very large and beautiful schooner yacht, which cost over half a million dollars, was discovered in July to be a dying ship. The yacht, owned by Alexander Cochrane of New York, was launched only last April. Her hull is composed partly of monel metal, a high-grade composition costing three times as much as copper, and for some uses the most durable metal known. But the hull also had steel in it, and steel, under certain conditions, is the enemy of metals like brass, bronze, copper, or monel. The salt water in which the yacht floated gave the steel its chance to destroy the monel, and the latter is disintegrating into a chalky substance, because of a chemical change called electrolysis which is taking place. It is only a question of time when the monel plates will be eaten through, and the vessel will sink." Such an electrolysis is any sin, like covetousness, when cherished in the soul.

Jezebel at once showed her unscrupulous vigor. In Ahab's name she ordered the city authorities of Jezreel to proclaim a holiday in honor of Naboth, and while he was enjoying this royal honor two worthless fellows ("sons of Belial") were to stand up and swear that Naboth had cursed God and the king, an offence punishable by death. The submissive city rulers obeyed Jezebel, Naboth was stoned to death on the charge of blasphemy, and his sons with him (2 Kings 9: 26), and Ahab went merrily from his palace to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.

Illustrations. Once a ship was wrecked on the Irish coast. It was not understood how the careful captain had got so far off his course, and a diver was sent down to investigate. Inside the compass-box he found a small bit of steel which proved to be the point of a pocket-knife used to clean the compass by a sailor the day before the wreck. That broken tip of a knife so deflected the compass as to make it a false guide and plunge the ship into ruin. Thus Ahab's first covetous gaze at Naboth's vineyard, persisted in, led him on to murder.

We need not think that because we do not kill others, as Ahab and Jezebel did, therefore we are safe from the sinner's fate. We are in terrible danger if we cherish even a little sin. "Neglect is enough to ruin any one. A man in business need not commit forgery or robbery to ruin himself; he has only to neglect his business and his ruin is certain. A man lying on a bed of sickness need not commit suicide by an overt act; he has only to neglect the means of recovery and he will die. To infer that because one is not a flagrant sinner he will be saved is as irrational as to infer that because he is not a drunkard his farm will produce a harvest." — *Albert Barnes*.

II. EVIL COURAGEOUSLY CONQUERED, 1 Kings 21: 17-28. The sin of Ahab and Jezebel was not done in a corner. All Israel must soon have heard of it, and every patriotic soul must have been on fire. Elijah, the great prophet who had already defied the king and had put to death on Mount Carmel four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, heard the voice of the Lord, either outwardly or in his heart, bidding him rebuke the iniquity and prophesy to Ahab that where dogs had licked up the blood of the murdered Naboth dogs should also lick his blood. As twice before (1 Kings 17: 1; 18: 18), so this third time the bold prophet did not hesitate to carry out the divine commission.

17. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

18. Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which *is* in Samaria: behold, *he is* in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he has gone down to possess it.

19. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

20. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found *thee*; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD.

Illustrations. "When you have been sitting in a well-lighted room, and are suddenly called into the outer darkness, how black it seems! And thus when a man has dwelt in communion with God, sin becomes exceedingly sinful, and the darkness in which the world lieth appears like tenfold night."—*Spurgeon*. Thus Ahab's iniquity appeared to Elijah.

"The persons in the world's history who have had the clearest conception of the character and the meaning of sin have been those who themselves led lives of the greatest purity. Christ had this conception, and so had Daniel and St. Augustine and St. Bernard. In order to understand the darkness, we must ourselves stand in the light."—*Rev. Cornelius Woelfkin, D.D.*

"There is a war raging, it is obvious to every one, between good and evil. But many men would fain be neutral. They would saunter through life like the country squire who went out with the hounds between the contending armies on the morning of the battle of Edgehill, indifferent to the rival claims of king and parliament."—*W. C. E. Newbolt*. There was no such indifference in the life of Elijah.

Elijah found Ahab in Naboth's vineyard, and the king's uneasy conscience told him at once that the prophet had come to condemn him. "Hast thou found me,

O mine enemy?" cried Ahab. He should have known that he was his own deadly enemy, and that Elijah was the truest friend he had in all the kingdom. Then Elijah, not condescending to refute Ahab's silly charge of personal hostility, boldly pronounced the decree—not of himself but of Jehovah. His family was to be cut off entirely, like the family of Naboth, and his wicked queen was also to be eaten by the dogs. At once Ahab humbled himself, tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, fasted, and mourned the ruin he had brought upon himself and his family. His sorrow was so great and his shame so real that Jehovah postponed the punishment; it



Ahab and Elijah.

did not fall upon Ahab, but upon the next generation. Ahab's son Jehoram, slain by Jehu, was cast into Naboth's vineyard (2 Kings 9: 25, 26), and soon afterward Jezebel also met the fate that Elijah had foretold (2 Kings 9: 30-37).

"Murder will out"—this proverb applies to all sins, those usually called small as well as the great ones. "He who sins against men may fear discovery, but he who sins against God is sure of it."—*Jones of Nayland*. "All evil acts are based

EPH. 5 : 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light : for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

upon an overestimate of the tolerance of God." — *G. H. Chadwick*. "There is a point beyond which it is no longer possible to repair the follies of the past." — *Taylor*. Ahab and Jezebel reached that point.

"If wrong you do in summer among the flowers,
You must atone in winter among the showers." — *Charles Mackay*.

Illustrations. Constantly men's sins furnish the scene and the instrument of their own destruction. "The deceiver is deceived, as was Jacob. The violator of the sanctities of family life is himself wounded and outraged in his tenderest and dearest relations, as was David. William Rufus perished, himself the third of his family who did so, in the New Forest, the scene of the sacrilege and the crimes of his race." — *Trench*.

The road to hell is the hard road. "Here is a man who comes home drunk and smashes the furniture, scares the children, beats his wife. The next morning — poor wretch, you cannot help pitying him, with his empty pocket and splitting head. I fancy I hear him say as he sees all the mischief he has done, 'O dear, what temptations, what troubles and trials there are on the road to hell!' Yes, there are indeed. It is a great deal easier to go to heaven than it is not to go." — *Mark Guy Pearse*.

"On the banks of the Niagara River, where the rapids begin to swell and swirl most desperately preparatory to their final plunge, is a sign-board which bears this startling inscription, 'Past Redemption Point!' The one who gets into those boiling rapids and passes that point cannot retrace his way or be rescued." — *Westminster Teacher*. Ahab and Jezebel had passed that point.

III. HOW TO TRIUMPH OVER TEMPTATION AND EVIL, Eph. 5 : 11-18. These verses are taken out of Paul's wonderful picture of the Christian life, modelled upon the life of Christ himself (Eph. 4 : 32 ; 5 : 1, 2). Written for the Christians of Asia Minor, they are as rich in wisdom for the Christians of all time. Especially are they full of suggestions for those that would conquer temptation and evil.

VICTORY BY SEPARATION, v. 11. **Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness**, the secret and shameful deeds of sin which result not in healthful fruit but in barrenness and death. The first lesson for the tempted is this, **Get away from the temptation**, at once, and as far away as possible. "Depart from evil" (Ps. 34 : 14). Cease to love evil ; come to hate it (Ps. 139 : 19-24). Pray constantly, "Bring me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one" (Matt. 6 : 13). No one ever got rid of sin by trying to see how near he could come to it without falling into it.

Illustrations. A Scottish laird was engaging a coachman, and asked each applicant how close he thought he could drive to the side of a certain road near by that skirted a precipice. One coachman thought he could drive within a foot of it; another, within three inches ; a third said he would drive as far from the precipice as he could, and he was the coachman the laird promptly selected.

"A prudent man won't swallow a potato-bug and then take Paris green to kill it." — *Billy Sunday*.

VICTORY BY REPROOF, vs. 11-14. The sense of this difficult passage seems to be as follows : We are not only to separate ourselves from evil deeds, **but rather even reprove them** (convict them, bring them to light) ; **for the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of**, much more to allow them to remain hidden. We are to be the light of the world. The work of light is to show things up ; and when things are shown up, those things also, perhaps, may be changed from darkness to light. For this reason the Scripture says (see Isa. 60 : 1 ; 51 : 17 ; 52 : 1, 2), **Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee**. Christ, the true Light, is to be the origin of our light ; and in all our reforming of others we are to be kindly and sympathetic, remembering that

14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

we ourselves were once dead in sins and were aroused only by the mercy of our Saviour.

This reproof of sin is to be done in the spirit of love (Lev. 19 : 17) but in firmness ; and if it is done in the right spirit, the reproof is God's voice speaking through ours. "Who will rise up *for me* against the evil-doers?" (Ps. 94 : 16). It is a test of the man reproofed : if he is foolish, he will hate the reprover ; if wise, he will love him (Prov. 9 : 8). By way of reproof come some of the most valuable blessings of life : "He that refuseth correction despiseth his own soul" (Prov. 15 : 5, 31, 32). Only a word of reproof is enough for the wise (see also Prov. 17 : 10), and he so cherishes the reproof as to make it an ornament to his life (Prov. 25 : 12). In view of all this the earnest Christian will follow Paul's bidding, and "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching" (2 Tim. 4 : 2).

Illustration. "Hugh Miller tells of a faithful Christian minister whose love for his people was intense. He requested that after his death a stone should be set up at the entrance of the church in which he had preached, where every one who entered could see it, and on the stone an inscription solemnly warning every person against sin. He wished that stone to be a witness for him when his tongue was silent in death." — *The Christian Herald*. Such faithful witness should be borne by every Christian in life that after death it may be said of him, "Though dead, he yet speaketh."

VICTORY BY THOUGHTFULNESS, vs. 15-17. Temptation must be met by heedfulness. The Christian must not imitate the foolish but the wise, living carefully ; buying up the opportunity (**redeeming the time**) to do good, because the days are full of evil possibilities ; discovering by earnest thought **what the will of the Lord is** for his special life. "How often one says, looking back upon a wrong action, 'If I had only known what I was doing, what the wrong-doing involved, I never should have committed it.' How often one says, 'I ought to have known better,' and execrates the folly of his wickedness. Old Thomas Fuller likened sin in prospect to a little rivulet which one may cross and scarcely wet the feet ; but in the retrospect it is a swollen, foaming, and impassable torrent." — *Rev. E. P. Parker, D.D.* The thoughtful Christian will note where temptation has assailed him, and will not go that way again.

Illustration. Rev. Stephen J. Corey tells in *The Christian Endeavor World* how once, as he was visiting a barrel factory, he saw the inspector come around just before the barrels were sent to the shipping room and thrust a small incandescent light into the hole in the side of each barrel. Then he stood for a moment with his eye at the opening, gazing steadily inside as if for something. Having finished the inspection, he made some marks on the barrel by which the men would understand what was to be done to it before it would be perfect and salable. Mr. Corey asked to be allowed to look inside, but all was black as pitch within. Then the inspector pushed him aside, thrust in the little incandescent light, and bade him look again. He found the inside of the barrel as light as day, all the imperfections clearly shown. Thus we never know our hearts till Jesus holds the light.

VICTORY BY TEMPERANCE, v. 18. **And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess** (R. V., "riot," dissoluteness). "Excess" in the Greek "is the exact equivalent of our word 'lost,' in a moral sense. Drunkenness is loss. 'The word is one,' says Trench, 'in which heathen ethics said much more than they intended or knew.'" — *New Century Bible*. The familiar story of Daniel's rise to power through his temperance (Dan. 1 : 8-20) furnishes the primary story material for this lesson. It exhibits the great gains of temperance, and is paralleled in millions of self-restrained lives to-day. Rom. 14 : 21 puts the duty of temperance on still higher ground, our care for our weaker brothers. Even if it were true (which it is not) that strong drink would not hurt us, it is a stumbling-block to so many millions that no lover of mankind will have anything to do with it.

VICTORY BY GOD'S HELP, vs. 17, 18. **The will of the Lord** (v. 17) is the guide of the overcoming Christian. He is not to be filled with wine, but to **be filled with the Spirit**. The Christian is to be satisfied fully, not with the horrible satiety of drunken-

17. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

18. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

ness, but with the splendid exaltation of the Spirit's indwelling. No greater contrast is possible. The most striking picture of it is found in Rom. 7: 14-8: 14. The most glorious example of it is in the life of Christ, who, through the power of the indwelling Spirit, was enabled to face and conquer the very spirit of evil (Heb. 12: 1-3). If Christ is dwelling in you, you also will conquer evil. "The power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ means our victory over all the baser things in our lives. You cannot be beaten as long as you trust in the power back of the resurrection victories, and strive to do as He would like to have you do." — *Robert E. Speer.*

"The cross on Golgotha will never save thy soul;
The cross in thine own heart alone can make thee whole.
Christ rose not from the dead, Christ still is in the grave,
If thou for whom he died art still of sin the slave." — *Johannes Schaffer.*

VICTORY BY LOVE, Rom. 12: 21-13: 10. Paul, in these stirring words, urges us to "overcome evil with good." Love is the basis of all reform — love of God the basis of personal reform, love of one's neighbor the basis of social and political reform.

VICTORY BY PRAYER, Deut. 9: 18. Moses fasted and prayed forty days for the sins of his people. Christ prayed for Peter, that his faith might conquer Satan

(Luke 22: 31, 32); and for all the disciples, that God would keep them from the evil one (John 17: 15). "When sin oppresses our souls the part of wisdom is not to belittle or evade it, not to despair or procrastinate, but to pray at once, as men with sudden qualms send for the doctor. Sin is the most curable of diseases if taken in time." — *Rev. D. J. Burrell, D.D.*

Illustration. A famous painting represents the devil and a young man playing chess, the stake being the young man's soul. The young man is in despair, for the situation seems to show that he has lost the game. But once Paul Morphy, the famous chess-player, saw the picture and said, "I can win the game for the young man." Setting up the position on a chess-board, he proceeded to play, and soon had checkmated the devil. Thus, in whatever desperate strait, by prayer we can call to our aid the Master who will win the game for us.



Retzsch's "Game of Life."

VICTORY BY GOD'S WORD, Luke 4: 1-13. When Jesus was confronted by his temptations in the wilderness, he met and overcame each of them with the Word of God. If he, whose own words were words of so great power, made use of the Bible to conquer Satan, how much more do we need to arm ourselves with that divine wisdom!

VICTORY BY SORROW, Luke 19: 41-44. As Christ wept over Jerusalem, so Christians should weep over the iniquities of modern cities. Until we feel the evils

of our country enough to shed tears over them, we are not likely to do much to reform them.

Illustration. Once a man dreamed he saw Jesus tied to a whipping post and a soldier was scourging him, making great blood stains at each blow. The dreamer rushed forward to stop the horrible deed, and in the soldier recognized — himself! Thus let every Christian feel that he has a personal share in the sins that are causing Jesus' heart to bleed.

VICTORY BY BOLDNESS, Luke 19: 45-48. Christ's driving of the money-changers and the merchants from the temple is an illustration of the power of righteous anger. Our Lord will put a strong whip of small cords into the hand of every Christian who, trusting in Christ for strength, tries to conquer any evil.

VICTORY BY SELF-CONTROL, 1 Cor. 9: 24-27. "If you would win victories," said Paul, "you must exercise self-control in all things. You must even buffet your body, and bring it into subjection to your will." It is said by a great authority on fire-fighting that ninety-nine per cent of fires could be extinguished with a glass of water, if taken in time; but men get scared and telephone to the fire department. Taken valiantly in time, any evil can be conquered in any life.

VICTORY BY DETERMINATION, Heb. 12: 4. "Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin" — that is a gallant word. In your conflict with evil, *never say die*. Though you fail a thousand times, turn up smiling for the thousand and first battle. "Do not you lose heart. Whatever fight you are waging you believe to be good, the mere fighting of the battle makes you stronger; you may be driven back for a little time, but you will come up again. Only, for Christ's sake, do not lose your heart, or you will lose yourself." — *Joseph Parker*.

LESSON XI. — September 15.

WINNING THE WORLD TO CHRIST. — Matthew 5: 13-16;
28: 18-20; Acts 16: 6-15; Nehemiah 1: 1-11.

PRINT Matt. 5: 13-16; 28: 18-20; Acts 16: 9-15.

(May be used with Missionary Applications.)

GOLDEN TEXT. *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.* — MARK 16: 15.

Devotional Reading: Phil. 2: 5-16.

Additional Material for Teachers: Num. 10: 20; Ps. 96: 3; Isa. 6: 8; Dan. 12: 3; Luke 22: 32; Rom. 1: 14; Phil. 2: 4-16; Jas. 5: 19, 20.

Primary and Junior Topic: Helping Others to Know Jesus.

Lesson Material: John 4: 4-15, 25-42.

Primary and Junior Story Material: John 4: 4-15, 25-42.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: How Christians Can Better Their Community, Nation, and the World.

Additional Material: Ps. 51: 13; Isa. 62: 1, 6, 7; Mark 16: 20; 1 Cor. 9: 22; Gal. 6: 9; Col. 4: 5; Rev. 22: 17.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

In all grades this is to be a missionary lesson, the various Bible passages bringing out the principles of missions, with examples of both home and foreign missions. The primary classes will study chiefly Christ's missionary work with the Samaritan woman and hers in her home town. The theme widens in the older grades, and in adult classes includes all questions of civic betterment through Christianity, national progress, and the winning of the world to Christ.

LEARN BY HEART.

Mark 16: 15; Matt. 5: 13-16; 28: 18-20.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — The Sermon on the Mount was perhaps spoken on the slope of the Horns of Hattin, a double-peaked hill on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, early in Christ's ministry. The Great Commission was given on an unknown mount in Galilee, toward the

close of the forty days following Christ's resurrection. The gospel was carried to Europe in Paul's second missionary journey, A.D. 49 or 50. Nehemiah was appointed governor of Judea in 445 B.C. (Bishop Ryle). Shushan (Susa) was in southern Persia.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christ's plans for his Kingdom.
Who should become missionaries?
How far are we from accomplishing the Great Commission?
The importance of foreign missions.
The importance of home missions.
What our class can do for missions.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Matthew and Acts.
The Cambridge Bible on Nehemiah.
Nehemiah, a Model for Men of Business, by Stowell. Comprehensive and stimulating books on home and foreign missions, such as Mott's *Decisive Hour of Christian Missions*, Platt's *The Frontier*, Report of the Edinburgh Missionary Confer-

ence, Wells's *Into All the World*. Your denominational missionary magazine and *The Missionary Review of the World*.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Great Commission and How to Carry It Out.

- I. THOSE TO WHOM THE GREAT COMMISSION IS GIVEN, Matt. 5 : 13-16.
Old Testament anticipations.
New Testament thoughts.
Christ the Great Missionary.
- II. THE TERMS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION, Matt. 28 : 18-20.
Old Testament foregleams.
The Great Commission accepted.
The heavenly invitation.
- III. CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION (FOREIGN MISSIONS), Acts 16 : 6-15.
Illustrations from the field.
- IV. CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION (HOME MISSIONS), Neh. 1 : 1-11.
Thoughts and illustrations.

MATT. 5 : 13. Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick ; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

I. THOSE TO WHOM THE GREAT COMMISSION IS GIVEN, Matt. 5 : 13-16. The Sermon on the Mount is the great charter of our religion. It describes the character and duty of a Christian in terms so plain and so inspiring that these glowing sentences will move to heroic action till the end of time. Our verses immediately follow the Beatitudes, which state the Christian's joy in terms of the Christian's duty, which is the only way in which joy can come. Next Christ proceeded to lay down the Christian's responsibility in view of his joys, opportunities, and powers.

FIRST, SALT. 13. Ye are the salt of the earth, and not merely of your family or town. The Christian's first duty is to preserve goodness, in himself and others. Salt is a great preserver, so long as it is salt ; let it lose its saltness, and no substance is more useless. So a fresh-spirited, pure-hearted follower of Christ arrests the decay of sin, the rot of selfishness and pride, keeps himself and the world around him sweet and unsullied. But that is only while he preserves his savour ; " the opportunity for doing good consists essentially in being good." — Prof. A. T. Robertson, D.D.

SECOND, LIGHT. 14-16. Ye are the light of the world. Salt preserves ; light also banishes mould, miasma, disease germs ; but light does more, it reaches out endlessly, it warms, it cheers, it fructifies, it transforms, it discloses. The true Christian does all this ; his work is not merely negative, destructive of the bad, but positive, constructing the good. The true Christian is thus in a position of conspicuous responsibility. He is like a city on a hill, such as the mount on which Christ was then standing ; his example is noted by all men. He is like a lamp on a lampstand,

not foolishly hidden under a bushel measure ; and just as the lamp does not shine of itself but because the oil in it is burning, so the Christian shines by virtue of the "oil of the Spirit," God's grace and strength working through him. There is no room for vain-glory in even the largest Christian house.

OLD TESTAMENT ANTICIPATIONS. Dan. 12 : 3 tells us that the "wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel himself was a great foreign missionary, a model of faithfulness to his God, though surrounded by all the temptations of heathenism. Every such missionary life is a star, whose light never goes out.

Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets, was therefore the greatest of the Old Testament missionaries. He got his commission and consecration when (Isa. 6 : 8) he heard the Lord's voice saying, "Whom shall I send ?" and promptly the heroic young man answered, "Here am I ; send me." To this devotion was given as a reward the clearest vision of the coming Messiah seen in all Old Testament times.

Illustrations. Alexander Mackay, a brilliant Scotchman, was in Germany getting an education as an engineer, when he received what he described as "a new conversion." Stanley's appeal for missionaries for the Dark Continent met his eye, he went at once as a pioneer missionary to Uganda in the heart of Africa, and utilized his wonderful skill and inventiveness in a thousand ways for the promotion of the missionary cause.

Bishop Thomas French, deeply consecrated to his work in India, was an old man when he read Mackay's appeal for missionaries to go to Arabia and stop the African slave trade by transforming its promoters, the Arabs. As no one else responded, he resigned his bishopric, learned Arabic, and went all alone to Muscat, where he began most zealous labors for the Moslems. He was there, however, only three months before a sunstroke in that terrible climate caused his death at the age of sixty-six.

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES. James, our Lord's brother, wrote (Jas. 5 : 19, 20) that whoever converts a sinner "shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins." This is the greatest incentive to missionary work (next to Christ's command), the knowledge of the endless death which awaits the unsaved. Paul felt this motive as well as James ; every missionary is spurred on by it, and every Christian should be.

Missionaries are made, not always of saints, sometimes of the worst sinners, converted. Peter, the rock-man, was also a wave-man. Christ, recognizing his weakness as well as his strength, prayed (Luke 22 : 32) that his faith might not fail, and bade him, "When once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren."

Illustrations. John Vanderkemp was fifty years old when he became a missionary. First a soldier, then a learned physician, he grew to be an infidel. Suddenly his wife and daughter were lost by drowning and he himself barely escaped with his life. This aroused him to a sense of his spiritual peril, he was gloriously converted, and soon after he was on his way to Africa as a missionary. He spent the rest of his life in earnest and most successful labors for his Lord.

A young Chinese engineer, converted while a student in America, organizes Bible classes as an avocation. Though still engaged in his profession, he is now overseeing seventy-one classes founded by himself and attended by eight hundred men.

CHRIST THE GREAT MISSIONARY. Phil. 2 : 4-16. This noble passage describes Christ's great renunciation of his heavenly glory, so much greater than any renunciation made by an earthly missionary ; his entrance into our humanity, a humiliation far deeper than any human missionary makes ; his sufferings even to death, so much more terrible even than the sufferings of a Judson ; and his exaltation, in which every true follower of his will have a share. Christ is thus the greatest of all missionaries, the model and incentive of all missionary lives. "The world has had a great many philosophers and heroes and martyrs, but only one Christ." — *James Brand*. "If you want to have backbone in your character, if you want a peace that cannot be shaken, if you want a courage that quails not before any task life will ever bring, the royal road to these things is to have behind you and within you the Christ, the eternal, changeless, omnipotent Son of God." — *James A. Francis*.

"Thou hast but this, to set thy feet where mine
Make prints, step after step, a track for thine." — *Margaret E. Sangster*.

Illustration. One day a friend of Handel came upon him as the great composer was overcome with emotion. He had been reading the Bible passages describing

MATT. 28:18. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

10. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

Christ's humiliation, and in his oratorio, "The Messiah," he was trying to express musically the wonderful words, "He was despised and rejected of men." We also shall become missionaries as we try to enter into the depths of Christ's sympathy and love.

11. **THE TERMS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION**, Matt. 28:18-20; compare Mark 16:15. The Great Commission was given under glorious circumstances, as the risen Lord stood on a mount in Galilee, surrounded by a company of five hundred disciples, "the fruit of the work of Jesus in Galilee, the nucleus of the kingdom of God on earth."—*Prof. A. T. Robertson, D.D.* Before these disciples Christ claims all authority . . . in heaven and on earth, a claim that no mere man could sanely make; and in consequence of this authority he bade his followers make disciples of all the nations, using the sacred rite of baptism, and the sacred formula representing the triune God, and teaching them to observe all Christ's commands. The scope of the Great Commission: all the world; the method: baptism, open confession; the result: lives lived in obedience to Christ; and the power in which all this is to be done: the continued presence of the Great Missionary, according to his glorious promise, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. What a wonderful programme is this of missions! And Christendom is carrying it out now with more zeal and greater success than ever before in the twenty centuries since Christ uttered these words.

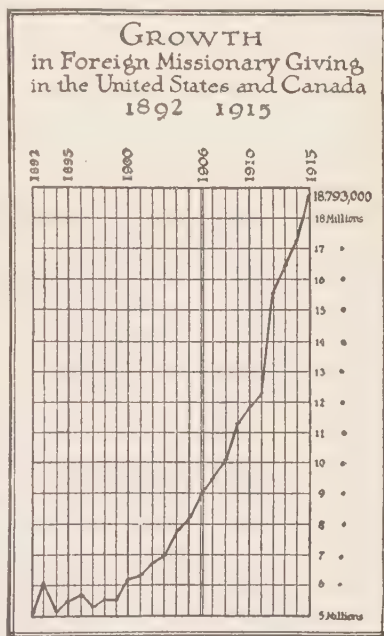
BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION. When Moses invited his father-in-law, Hobab, to join his great enterprise, the conquest of Canaan, he used words that apply to all missionary activity: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good" (Num. 10:20).

When the psalmist cried (Ps. 96:3), "Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous works among all the peoples," he used words exactly parallel to the Great Commission.

When the psalmist promised (Ps. 51:13), "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee," his spirit was the same as Paul's when the apostle declared himself (Rom. 1:14) "debtor both to Greeks and Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish."

When John in the Revelation heard the heavenly invitation (Rev. 22:17), it was in terms that continued the Great Commission: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come." Indeed the entire Bible, from first page to the last, is a vast and shining commentary on the Great Commission.

III. CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION: FOREIGN MISSIONS, Acts 16:6-15. Perhaps the most striking and important of all the steps taken by Christians in the process of obedience to the Great Commission was the carrying of Christianity from Asia to Europe. This meant the enlargement of Christianity from a local to a world-wide religion, from a religion of one race to a religion for all races.



ACTS 16: 9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

12. And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

1. This step was taken by the man of all men best fitted to take it, the heroic, devoted, and many-sided apostle Paul, with his noble companions, Luke, Timothy, and Silas.

2. The step was taken under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Paul, returning over the scene of his former missionary work in southern Asia Minor, wished to extend his labors to the great city of Ephesus on the western coast, but the Spirit forbade him; then to Bithynia, to the north on the Black Sea, but again the Spirit prevented. So he was led to a city midway between the two regions, the famous Troy, where he had in the night a vision of a man of Macedonia, the nearest European country, and heard the burning words, the cry of progressive missions ever since, **Come over into Macedonia, and help us.**

3. The step was taken in a way characteristic ever since of the great missionary enterprise. (a) The four workers obeyed the divine call *promptly, straightway.* (b) They set sail for the place indicated, for Philippi, the nearest large city of Macedonia, not for the famous cities of Athens or Corinth. (c) They went right to work, definitely and boldly, without waiting for cautious preliminaries. (d) They used the first opening for evangelism, finding, in lieu of a synagogue, a humble place of prayer, in the open air beside the river Gangites. (e) They approached the first persons they met there, a party not of men but of women. (f) They made one convert, the noble-hearted Lydia, from Thyatira in the Asia they had just left. She was an active business woman, a dealer in purple-dyed goods, a worshipper of Jehovah, and she adopted the new religion so gladly and unreservedly that she was at once baptized with her household, and insisted that Paul and his party should lodge at her house. Note in all this the missionary characteristics of *promptness, directness, boldness, and humility*; also the grateful acceptance of whatever result God may vouchsafe, however meagre. Christianity on most mission fields has begun with the women, the slaves, the outcasts, the despised, and with them has conquered nations.

THE GREAT COMMISSION ACCEPTED. The Gospel of Matthew closes with the Great Commission; that of Mark, with its acceptance: "They went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen" (Mark 16: 20). This is the way the Commission has been accepted by multitudes of missionaries ever since.

THE METHOD OF CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION is briefly set forth in 1 Cor. 9: 22: "I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some." Thus the many-sided Paul was the founder of the many-sided missionary enterprise, which seeks by all means — by the printing-press and colportage work, by medical work, by educational work, by evangelistic work, by industrial work, by songs, pictures, conversations, sermons — by all means to save all men.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE FIELD. A Brahman visiting a missionary in India saw on the wall a picture of Christ washing the disciples' feet, and began to criticise Christians for not imitating their Master in feet-washing. "But," answered the missionary, "that is just what we are doing all the time! You Brahmans say that you sprang from the head of your god Brahm; that the next lower caste sprang from his shoulders; the next lower, from his loins; and that the low caste sprang from his feet. We are washing India's feet; and when you proud Brahmans see the low caste and the outcaste getting educated and Christianized — washed, clean, beautiful, and holy inside and outside — then you Brahmans and all India will say, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.'"

13. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made ; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

14. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us* : whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

C. T. Studd came back from his splendid missionary work in Africa and found that his country had raised a vast army to fight Germany. His comment was : " God suddenly said to me, ' Mr. Studd, look at my army ! forty million Britishers — three million men to fight Germany ; forty million communicants in Christendom, and they produce a magnificent army of twenty thousand missionaries, and a third of them are women ! God has allowed this war to come along to teach us how to fight. If we will do it for our country, what will we do for Jesus Christ ? "

" Do you like your work in Africa ? " some one asked a missionary. He answered, " Do I like this work ? No ; my wife and I do not like dirt. We do not like crawling into vile huts through goat refuse. We do not like association with ignorant, filthy, brutish people. But is a man to do nothing for Christ he does not like ? God pity him, if not."

A poor man in China, who is a Christian, has to work all day away from home. He has put on the door of his house this notice : " I am a Christian, and if any wish to go in and read my Good Book while I am out, they may. The Buddhist priests need not come here. I do not want them any more." People often go into his house and read the Bible.

Judson, the noble missionary to Burma, often asked to be called " Jesus Christ's man." " Are you the Jesus Christ's man ? " asked a native who, having read in a little tract the good and strange things taught by the missionary, had travelled many hundreds of miles to learn more of them ; " give me more writing that tells about Jesus Christ."

IV. CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION : HOME MISSIONS, Neh. I : I-II. Nehemiah was a home missionary who went from a foreign field. He was a Hebrew, who lived in Persia during the exile. He had risen to an important office, being one of the cupbearers of the king Artaxerxes ; close to him, therefore, and in a position to influence him. He was a devout man and a sincere patriot, so that he was profoundly moved when one winter day his relative, Hanani, came to him in the Persian winter capital, Susa, with the sad news that the Jews left behind in Judea were in great distress, that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down, and so the sacred city was exposed to its enemies. Nehemiah mourned for days over this news, with fastings and earnest prayer. He confessed to God the many sins of his people, their scorn of the prophets, their worldliness and idolatry, because of which God had allowed them to be conquered and taken into captivity. He prayed that he might be able to influence Artaxerxes, and his prayer was granted. Receiving from his royal master permission to return to Jerusalem, he organized the people, led them in rebuilding the walls, and with a stout heart defied their foes. He introduced religious and social reforms, and was a wise governor of his people.

BIBLE LIGHT ON HOME MISSIONS. Isa. 62 : 1, 6, 7 illustrates the spirit of the prophets, those great Hebrew home missionaries. They were " watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem," " the Lord's remembrancers," ceaselessly working and ceaselessly praying for the holiness of the people.

Christ, the great foreign missionary, was also the great home missionary. He labored wholly for his own people, hardly stepping beyond the confines of Palestine, that his own people might win the world. All his disciples, like the woman of Sychar (John 4 : 4-15, 25-42), became first missionaries to their own towns and country, and then extended their labors as far as they could reach.

Paul (Col. 4 : 5) laid down the rule for all home and foreign missions : " Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time " (" buying up the opportunity "). Missionaries are eager for every chance at soul-saving.

Paul also expressed the missionary's assurance of reward: "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). What does the missionary reap? The saved souls of men, Christ's approval and gratitude, his own peace on earth and eternal joy in heaven. What a harvest is that!

THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS. Said a minister to his young people, "I want you to spend fifteen minutes every day praying for missions; but I warn you that it will be a very costly experiment." "Costly?" they asked in surprise. "Yes, costly," he answered. "When Carey began to pray for the conversion of the world, it cost him himself, and it cost those who prayed with him very much. Brainerd prayed for the dark-skinned savages, and, after two years of blessed work, it cost him his life. Two students in Mr. Moody's summer school began to pray the Lord to send forth more laborers into his harvest, and lo! it is going to cost our country five thousand young men and women who have, in answer to their prayer, pledged themselves to the work. You will find that you cannot pray for this work and withhold your labor, or your money, or your life itself."

"Every man is a missionary, now and forever, for good or for evil, whether he intends it or not. He may be a blot, radiating his dark influence outward to the very circumference of society; or he may be a blessing, spreading benediction over the length and breadth of the world; but a blank he cannot be. There are no moral blanks; there are no neutral characters. Being dead or alive, every man speaks." — *Thomas Chalmers*.

After 100 Years. "A century ago nearly every country in Asia and Africa was closed to the gospel; there were practically no missionaries

missionaries, working in practically every country on the globe.

"Then, the Bible had been translated into 65 languages or dialects; now, into more than 500.

"Then, there were contributed a few thousands of dollars a year; now \$25,000,000 [and still more for home missions].

"Then, there was no native ministry; now, nearly 93,000 native pastors, evangelists, etc.

"Then, there were no single women missionaries; now there are over 6000.

"Then, there were just a few mission schools

started; now there are over 30,000 Protestant mission schools and colleges.

"Then, there were no mission presses; now there are 160 publishing houses and mission presses, and 400 Christian periodicals published on the mission field.

"Then, no Protestant denomination, as such, was committed to missions, excepting the Moravians; now, every respectable denomination has its missions.

"Then, not a solitary mission hospital or charitable institution; now 400 mission hospitals and over 500 orphanages and asylums.

"Then, Judson, Carey, and Morrison had to labor from seven to ten years for a first convert; now there are more than 2,000,000 Protestant Christians in heathen lands, besides all who have passed on." — *Rev. H. C. Mabie, D.D.* It is thus that the churches are carrying out the Great Commission.

"Heralds of Christ who bear the King's commands,
Immortal tidings in your mortal hands,
Pass on and carry swift the news ye bring,
Make straight, make straight the Highway of the King."

— *Laura S. Copenhaver.*



Syrian Protestant College at Beirut.

Everything about the college is distinctly American.

LESSON XII. — September 22.

FRUITS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. — Matt. 25:14-30; 5:1-12.

PRINT Matt. 25:20-23; 5:3-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *All things are yours; . . . and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.* — 1 COR. 3:21 b, 23.

Devotional Reading : Gal. 5:15-25.

Additional Material for Teachers : Ps. 17:15; Isa. 51:11; Acts 10:25; Rom. 2:10; 5:1, 2.

Primary Topic : The Happiness of Right Doing.

Lesson Material : Matt. 25:14-30.

Primary Memory Verse : Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord. — Matt. 25:21.

Junior Memory Verse : Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord. — Matt. 25:21.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic : How Christ Blesses His Followers on Earth and in Heaven.

Additional Material : Ps. 1:1-3; John 14:27; 15:11; 16:22-24, 33; 2 Cor. 9:10; Phil. 4:4-7, 13, 19; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8; Rev. 22:14.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

While the parable of the talents will form the basis of the lesson for the younger classes, they are already familiar with the Beatitudes, and both passages may be used to teach them about the results that come from doing Christ's will. The older classes will study from the entire Bible the great truth that evil brings ruin but righteousness brings the highest happiness. Illustrations, from text and biography, both sacred and secular, are of course very numerous, and the lesson should be among the most practical of this practical series.

LEARN BY HEART.

Matt. 5:3-10; Ps. 1:1-3; Gal. 5:22, 23; Rev. 22:14.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — The Beatitudes, the opening section of the Sermon on the Mount, were spoken about the middle of Christ's ministry, perhaps on a level portion of the Horns of Hattin, a double peaked hill west of the Sea of Galilee. The parable of the talents was spoken in Jerusalem, probably in the temple, during the week before the crucifixion.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Matthew. *Lives of Christ*, especially those by Farrar, Edersheim, and Geikie. *Books on the*



The Sermon on the Mount.

Bida,

Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount, by Dykes, Genung, Gore, Horton, etc. *Books on the Parables*, by Trench, Bruce, Calderwood, Dods, Guthrie, Hubbard, Kirk, Lang, Morgan, Sallmon, Stevens, Stretton, Taylor, etc. *The Quest of Happiness*, by Newell Dwight Hillis. *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, by Hannah Whitall Smith.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Fruits of the Christian Life.

- I. RESPONSIBILITY AND REWARD,**
Matt. 25 : 14-30.
The parable of the talents.

II. CHARACTER AND CONSEQUENCES,
Matt. 5 : 1-12.

The Beatitudes.

III. THE TREE AND ITS FRUITS : ON EARTH, IN HEAVEN.

"All things are yours."

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Christ's ideal of success in life.

Christ's ideal of happiness.

The fruits of the Spirit as illustrated in Bible biography.

The fruits of the Spirit as shown in the lives of men now living.

How to be happy.

In what will happiness in heaven consist?

MATT. 25 : 20. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents : behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21. His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant : thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

I. RESPONSIBILITY AND REWARD, Matt. 25 : 14-30. Having studied through this quarter the character of the Christian life, the final lesson of the course deals appropriately with its fruits, its results and rewards. Nowhere is this better set forth than in the parable of the talents and in the Beatitudes.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS is found only in Matthew ; the parable of the pounds, Luke 19 : 12-27, is similar, but there are important differences.

Slaves, in ancient times, had much responsibility and authority, carrying on many of the operations of trade and commerce. Jesus imagines a man of property obliged to leave for a long journey, and placing his money in the hands of his trusted slaves, to use in trade or in farming, and increase it as much as possible. The money was estimated by weight, the unit being a talent — whence our English word "talent" is derived. A talent was worth in Greek money more than \$1200. Two servants, having five and two talents respectively, bought and sold with the money and made good gains. The third, who received only one talent because of his inferior ability, proved his master's judgment by merely burying the money, thus keeping it safe, but not adding to it. When the owner returned he commended the faithful servants and promised to reward them. The unfaithful servant tried to excuse himself by alleging that his master was a hard man, of whose severity he was afraid ; moreover, his master, he implied, was an unjust man, getting gains without laboring for them ; for these reasons he had merely buried the money, not venturing to trade with it, lest he might lose it. "If I had the character you charge me with," said the master, "for that very reason you should have been the more zealous to put out my money at interest, if you did not dare trade with it." So the talent was taken from him and given to the five-talent man who had doubled his money, while the unprofitable servant was discharged and his life ruined.

TEACHINGS OF THE PARABLE. 1. Every Christian is a servant of Christ, his slave, under his orders, bound to work for him with all his time and strength and mind.

2. Christians differ in ability, and in opportunities ; therefore they differ in responsibility. No one is held responsible for more than Christ has given him ; but he is held strictly responsible for that.

3. Christ is no longer on the earth in visible form, but Christians are his representatives, each receiving a share of his authority and given a part of his work to do. It is a glorious and important task.

4. The one-talent man is less likely to be faithful with his single talent than the five-talent man with his larger responsibility. Men of slight ability are too liable

22. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliverdst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

23. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

MATT. 5: 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

to think that they do not count, like the player on the piccolo in the great orchestra; but the conductor instantly missed the piccolo when it was silent.

5. Christ is not content with the return of the ability he gives us, but insists that we increase it, whatever it may be. Every Christian should progress constantly in strength, nobility, and usefulness.

6. The penalty for not using a talent is to lose it. The punishment for not going forward is to go backward.

7. All faithful servants of Christ are honored by him, and equal fidelity brings equal reward. Christ gave to the five-talent man and the two-talent man precisely the same words of praise.

Illustrations and Thoughts. There is no happiness like that which comes from following Christ. J. G. Phelps Stokes, son of a New York millionaire, entered settlement work for a life occupation. Some one was pitying him for thus giving up all fun and pleasure, when he answered, "This is the most interesting life I have ever led. It is deep, whole-souled enjoyment from beginning to end."

"My ideal of a happy life, after I leave school," said a girl of eighteen, "is to be allowed to sleep late in the morning, have my breakfast in bed, go to entertainments as often as I please, and have chicken salad and ice-cream every day for dinner." This girl had an invalid mother, who needed all the care and devotion that a daughter could give, and a father who was devoted to her and wanted her companionship. She was idealizing selfishness; but selfishness is ugly, and always leads to misery." — *Queen's Gardens.*

"Happiness makes happiness," once said a woman of many sorrows and burdens. But she had borne them all bravely, had kept a smile on her face when her heart was weeping, had tried to cheer up others when she needed cheering herself, and had found that the joy she created reacted upon her own life and filled it full of sunshine. Her talents of happiness came back to her doubled.

"A small boy was at play when he heard his father calling him. Reluctantly he left his companions to answer the call. 'What do you want?' the boy said with little grace, for he expected to be sent upon some errand which would interfere with his game. 'I just wanted to give you this,' his father replied as he handed the boy a coin." — *Forward.* Thus when God calls us, and we think we are summoned to what is hard and repellent, we find ourselves called to all happiness.

"The greatest happiness comes from the greatest activity." — *Bovee.* "Happiness comes from striving, doing, loving, achieving, conquering, always something positive and forceful." — *David Starr Jordan.* "A wise man has given three rules for happiness: something to do, some one to love, and something to hope for."

"We shape ourselves the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made,
And fill our future atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade." — *Whittier.*

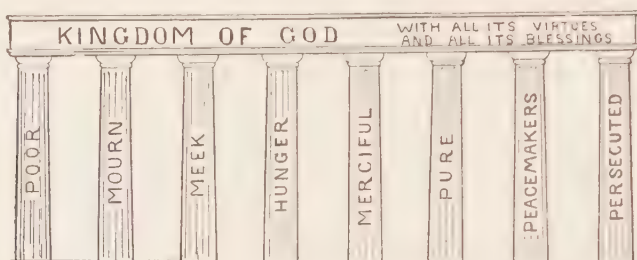
II. CHARACTER AND CONSEQUENCES, Matt. 5: 1-12. In the parable of the talents Christ emphasized the rewards of deeds; in the Beatitudes, the rewards of character. True character shows itself in deeds, true deeds depend upon character; but it is well to look at the matter from both sides. In the Beatitudes Christ presents a wonderfully beautiful picture of the ideal Christian character, a character quite the opposite of what the world had called blessed up to that time. There are eight steps in Christ's golden stairway of happiness.

1. *The Step of Humility* (v. 3). The poor in spirit are not rich in pride. With Paul, they count themselves as "less than the least," because they realize their many faults and sins. Yet the kingdom of heaven is owned by them, for it is a kingdom of lowliness. "Humility" comes from the Latin "humus," the ground;

4. Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
5. Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
6. Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
7. Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
8. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

and humility is the very groundwork of Christlikeness. Fittingly, this is the first step in Christ's golden stairway of happiness, the step nearest the ground.

2. *The Step of Sorrow* (v. 4). It seems strange indeed that Christ should call mourners blessed, and especially that he should add, **for they shall be comforted**. Would it not be far better to have no occasion for comforting? But any condition which brings the Comforter is a blessing. Mourning for our sins brings him. So does



the inevitable grief which accompanies the trial of our faith (1 Pet. 1: 5-7) by persecution, sickness, poverty, the loss of our loved ones, however bravely these trials are borne. All these trials, endured with Christ's help, bring a strength of character, a fulness of faith, and a final peace that are the highest of gains.

3. *The Step of Meekness* (v. 5). Before the time of Christ it was held that not meekness but haughtiness, overbearingness, should **inherit the earth**. Aristotle, for instance, called meekness "a mean inclining to a defect." In the person of Christ himself, the meek and lowly one, it is seen how a gentle, longsuffering, and forgiving spirit conquers men's hearts, governs their wills, and subdues the earth to itself. This is also the result of meekness in all Christ's followers.

4. *The Step of the Love of Righteousness* (v. 6). There is only one kind of hunger and thirst that is invariably and immediately satisfied, and that is the **hunger and thirst after righteousness**. Hunger for gold, thirst for applause, desire for beauty, passion for pleasure, greed of power, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life — none of these are **filled** merely by wishing and seeking; indeed, the experience of satisfaction does not belong to them at all. But the longing for goodness *is* goodness; in this matter alone is Lowell's line absolutely true, "The thing we long for, that we are."

5. *The Step of Mercy* (v. 7). Is it reward enough for the merciful that **they shall obtain mercy**? It certainly is, for all men need mercy. All have sinned, sinned deeply, sinned fatally; all need to pray: "The mercy I to others show, that mercy show to me." No one can be anything but pitying to wrongdoers when he realizes how wrong he is himself.

6. *The Step of Purity* (v. 8). Christian purity must be *heart* purity; outward purity, ceremonial purity, is not enough. "Purity is a distinguishing virtue of Christianity. It finds no place even in the teaching of Socrates, or in the system of Aristotle." — *Cambridge Bible*. Impurities of all kinds flourish in heathen nations, and even fester in their temples. The reward of heart purity is the greatest that can be imagined: **they shall see God**. Likeness is a prerequisite to seeing. Only the artistic eye can see the full beauty of a picture or a landscape. Only the Godlike soul can really see God.

7. *The Step of Peace* (v. 9). The peacemakers, whom Christ calls blessed, are not merely those that put an end to quarrels; they are those in whom dwells the peace of God, which "passes understanding," and who do what they can to make

9. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

that peace prevail in the hearts and lives of other men. Christ is the Prince of peace; no wonder that these peacemakers are called **the children of God**, the brothers of the Prince of peace. The great war in Europe shows us how far the world still is from the winning of this Beatitude.

8. *The Step of Spiritual Earnestness* (vs. 10-12). Christ does not say that the persecuted are blessed; many a foolish zealot has suffered for the sake of obstinate prejudice, religious bigotry, or partisan zeal, and has had no share in the blessedness which Christ promised. But persecution for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake, is rewarded by **the kingdom of heaven**. This is because "the kingdoms of this world" are based on unrighteousness, but the kingdom of heaven is based on righteousness. The world persecutes the righteous, but heaven receives them with praise and blessing. Alas for the man who is not enough in earnest to be persecuted! This is the highest step in Christ's golden stairway of happiness, bringing us closest to him who was oppressed and afflicted, and who suffered the extreme of persecution upon the cross. Thus lifted up, he drew all men to him, and founded upon persecution the kingdom of heaven.

Illustrations and Thoughts. The happy Christian sees his joy reflected in a world that appears to him to be all blessedness. A child was walking through the "Moorish Palace" at a world's fair, — rooms whose walls were mirrors endlessly multiplying the images of all that entered. "How happy every one looks!" exclaimed the child, for everywhere she saw the image of her own smiling face.

Happiness consists not in having but in being. Dr. Samuel Johnson once named as an essential to happiness that you should have "a little less time than you want." He was a very busy man and he valued time, but he knew that the men of leisure, with more time than they want, are not the happy men. A little less time than you want keeps you happily industrious. Thus also a little less money than you want, a little less pleasure than you want, even a little less goodness than you want, all prevent the stagnation of complete satisfaction.

A pretty young woman, girlish in her appearance, returned for a short visit after five years on a mission field. She startled her hearers at a missionary meeting by stating that she had found it "real fun" to be a missionary. Dana, the famous editor of the *New York Sun*, was once commiserated on account of the alleged "grind" of his work, but answered, "You were never more mistaken. I have nothing but fun." Whoever does his work in the spirit of Christ and with his help, however hard the work may be, will find it "nothing but fun."

"God's blessings steal into life noiselessly; they are neither self-proclaiming nor even self-announcing." — *Beecher*. "Tis impious in a good man to be sad." — *Edward Young*. "Real happiness is cheap enough, yet how dearly are we in the habit of paying for its counterfeit!" — *Hosea Ballou*.

III. **THE TREE AND ITS FRUITS: ON EARTH, IN HEAVEN.** *Character is like a tree* (Ps. 1: 1-3). All character produces fruit; bad character produces apples of Sodom, noble character produces healthful and delicious food.

The fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 15-25) is just such elements of character as the Beatitudes require, practically paralleling them. No one can have this fruit until the Holy Spirit dwells in his life, guiding his thought and action.

Christian happiness and rewards must not be estimated by worldly standards (John 14: 27). Christ does not give as the world gives, but essentially different and infinitely better. Thus a Christian may be "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6: 10). Chained in the most horrible prison like Paul and Silas, he yet will sing songs in the night (Acts 16: 25).

The most unbounded promises are made to the possessors of Christian character. They are told that all their prayers will be granted (John 16: 22-24), because they are made in the spirit of Christ. They can do all things (Phil. 4: 13), because Christ strengthens them. Theirs are "glory and honor and peace" (Rom. 2: 10), because they are doing good. If you have the Christian character, you will surely be enjoying the Christian rewards.

Great joy always accompanies the Christian character. This is Christ's joy (John 15: 11), joy like his, joy of which he is the fount. It is perpetual, unbroken joy (Phil. 4: 11).

4-7, 10) ; the Christian will "rejoice always." It is joy that defies all the trouble that the world can bring. Christ has overcome the world for the Christian, and he cannot fail of good cheer (John 16 : 33).

The Christian's faith and joy are based upon his faith in Christ. Through him "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5 : 1, 2). "All things" are ours, because "we are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3 : 21, 23). Whenever we try to base our happiness on anything but Christ, even upon the purest earthly love and the noblest human deeds, we are sure to fail.

"At the heart of the cyclone tearing the sky,
And flinging the clouds and the towers by,
Is a place of central calm :
So here in the roar of mortal things
I have a place where my spirit sings,
In the hollow of God's Palm." — *Edwin Markham.*

All these fruits of the Christian life are continued from earth to heaven, from time to eternity. "Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads" is prophesied of all God's children (Isa. 51 : 11). The "crown of righteousness" is "laid up" not only for the great apostle Paul, but also for all that love Christ (2 Tim. 4 : 7, 8). Not only David, but all Christians, will "be satisfied, when they awake (from the sleep of death), with beholding thy form" (Ps. 17 : 15). On the very last page of the Bible, its climax page, is written : "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city" (Rev. 22 : 14). They shall not go out forever.

Illustrations and Thoughts. "Charlotte Brontë objected very strongly to being told to cultivate happiness, as if it were a potato, and declared it, instead, a glory shining down upon us out of heaven. But in answer to that it may be said that there are two kinds of happiness, one that falls in golden radiance from above, and one that grows up out of the homely soil of every-day life. There is a happiness that is as much out of our control as the winds that blow or the tides of the sea. And there is another happiness which we may plant as we do morning-glories, and cultivate through the commonplace days, till life is all abloom." — *Young People's Weekly.*

Rabbi Akiba and four other rabbis were walking together and heard at a distance the laughter and joyous shouts of a multitude. The other rabbis wept, but Akiba laughed aloud. "Why are you laughing?" the other rabbis chided him. "These heathen who worship idols live in peace and are merry, while our whole city lies in ruins ; weep, do not laugh." "For that very reason I laugh and am glad," answered Akiba. "If God allows those who transgress his will to live happily on earth, how infinitely greater must be the happiness which he has stored up in the world to come for those who observe his commands !" — *From the Talmud.*

"It is told of a celebrated infidel lecturer that, after completing his address one evening, he invited his audience to discuss the subject on which he had spoken. He announced himself willing to answer any question. A plain little woman, about to pass out of the building, paused long enough to say to the lecturer : 'Sir, I was left a widow with little children to support and care for. All I had with which to face the world was my Bible and my faith in God. But I was directed, helped, and comforted, and we were brought safely through the hard years. That is what my religion did for me. What has your belief done for you?' There is no record of any answer." — *Forward.*

One of the sweetest fruits of the Christian life is an unfaltering trust. A tiny girl, unused to travelling, was greatly disturbed when the train came to the rivers. She would see the water ahead of her, and could not understand how she was to cross safely. But time after time, as the train drew near the river, a bridge would appear, and they would go over it to the other side. At last, after several such experiences, the child leaned back in her seat with a sigh of relief. "Somebody," she said, "has put bridges for us all the way !" Into this happy confidence we come as a result of the Christian life.

"Most people want more than they have any human reason to expect. And that is exactly what God wants to give them. He wants us to be unreasonably happy, because unreasonably well provided for in every way. 'Unreasonably' is only another way of saying 'supernatural.' And God wants our life to be a supernatural experience all the time. When you turn it all over to him, and believe that his Word is always true, you and yours will know the unreasonably happy life, lavished upon you by your supernatural Lord." — *Sunday School Times.*

"The descent from the summit of earthly grandeur to the abyss of misery is not uncommon. But heavenly honor and prosperity advance gradually from small beginnings, and will increase forever." — *Thomas Scott*. "Thou wilt always rejoice in the evening if thou hast spent the day profitably." — *Thomas à Kempis*. "It is not rare gifts that make men happy. It is the common and simple and universal gifts; it is health and the glance of sunshine in the morning; it is fresh air; it is the friend, the lover; it is the kindness that meets us on the journey; it may be only a word, a smile, a look; — it is these, and not any rarity of blessing, that are God's gentle art of making happy." — *Rev. G. H. Morrison*.

"Push on and make the toil intense,
Nor think of recompense.
Rejoice! 'Tis thine the radiant right to live,
To love and give.
Rejoice! Upon thy hill of toil
Thy sons shall rise a man's height from the soil;
Rejoice, be ever young,
Let only songs of hope and joy be sung.
For fellow-man toil on, nor look behind;
Look up amid the strife
To that serener life,
And guidance find.
Be brave! The brave heart dares,
Beats on the bars of Fate and onward fares —
Right onward fares to nobler domes than these,
To wider harbors and to safer seas." — *Fred Lewis Pattee*.

LESSON XIII. — September 29.

REVIEW: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

SELECTION FOR READING: 1 John 3:1-24.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth.* — 1 JOHN 3:18.

Primary and Junior Topic: What It Means to Be a Follower of Jesus.

Primary Memory Verses: And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. — Matt. 22:37-39.

A number of different forms of review are given, to suit the different ages of pupils and their development. The teacher should select the review best suited to his class, and possibly two or more of these review plans may be combined.

I. PICTURES DISCLOSED.

In the younger classes use may be made of the beautiful series of lesson pictures published by the publishers of this book, the W. A. Wilde Company, Boston. The teacher will prepare for each lesson three or four simple but comprehensive and interesting questions and write them on broad strips of paper which will be fastened over the picture belonging to the lesson in such a way that the picture is entirely hidden. The pictures may be fastened to the blackboard with thumb tacks and the strips fastened over them with tacks or pins. The pupils will take turns going to the board, removing a slip of paper, reading the question, and answering it. As each picture is disclosed it may be given to one of the pupils, until each has received a copy. Here are sample questions on Lesson I: Why should we love Jesus? Why should we trust Jesus? If we love Jesus, what should we do? What is it to be a Christian?

II. CHART REVIEW.

This form of review may be used in the following way. A week in advance tell the pupils about it, having them note down the headings of the columns. Ask them to come to the class with the columns filled out for each lesson. Spend the lesson period in forming the chart on a blackboard or large sheet of paper as the pupils dictate it, making comments and asking questions as you go along.

LESSON	SUBJECT	BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS	CENTRAL TEXT	CENTRAL THOUGHTS
1	Beginning the Christian Life.	Call of the first disciples.	He that will, let him take the water of life freely. — Rev. 22: 17.	The Christian takes Christ for his Saviour and does Christ's will.
2	Reading God's Word.	Parable of the two foundations. Emmaus disciples. Bereans.	Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. — John 8: 32.	The Bible is a perfect revelation of God's will for men and guide to life.
3	Praying to God.	Christ's prayers. Prayers for Peter.	Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, etc. — Heb. 4: 16.	God always hears and answers the prayers of trusting and obedient hearts.
4	Obedying God.	Christ's "Come ye after me."	If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments. — John 14: 15.	God is to be obeyed thoughtfully, promptly, and gladly.
5	Growing Stronger.	Jesus' growth.	The path of the righteous is as the dawning light, etc. — Prov. 4: 18.	We are to grow constantly in wisdom, strength, and happiness.
6	Helping Others.	The good Samaritan.	Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. — Gal. 6: 2.	We are to help, in Christ's strength, all the needy whom we can reach.
7	Working in the Church.	Ezra's Bible school.	Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, etc. — Ps. 100: 4.	The church has a right to the best of our thought, strength, time, and zeal.
8	Speaking for Christ.	The disciples commissioned.	Every one who shall confess me before men, etc. — Luke 12: 8.	The noble power of speech should be consecrated to the service of Christ.
9	Christian Giving.	Giving to the tabernacle. The widow of Zarephath. Mary's ointment. The widow's mite.	Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, etc. — Acts 20: 35.	Our gifts to Christ's work should be intelligent, systematic, and generous.
10	Conquering Evil.	Daniel's temperance.	Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, etc. — Eph. 5: 11.	Christians should oppose every evil, and conquer it in Christ's strength.
11	Winning the World to Christ.	Salt and light. Macedonian call. Nehemiah's return.	Go ye into all the world, etc. — Mark 16: 15.	We are to reach out, as far as we can, with all the good things Christ has given us.
12	Fruits of the Christian Life.	The talents.	All things are yours; . . . and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. — 1 Cor. 3: 21b, 23.	The Christian has all blessedness, on earth and in heaven.

III. PRESENT-DAY APPLICATIONS.

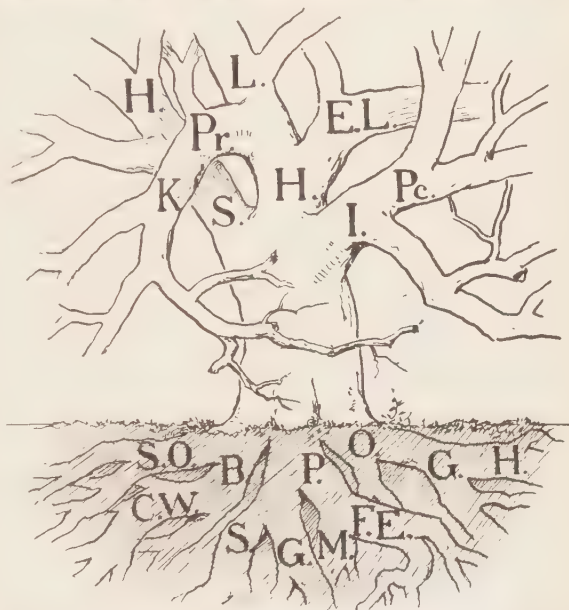
The lessons of this quarter are full of suggestions for present-day applications that the older classes will wish to discuss, and doubtless they will have wished for more time for this purpose all through the three months. The review may be devoted to these applications, and each lesson may be assigned to a different member of the class, for him to discuss from this viewpoint. He should confine himself

strictly to three minutes, and to that end should write and read what he has to say. The following topics for the twelve lessons may be helpful:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proper requirements for admission to our modern churches. 2. Why the Bible has more influence to-day than ever before. 3. Things for which all Christians should to-day unite in prayer. 4. Is the quality of obedience declining? 5. How to strengthen our churches. 6. Christian helpfulness needed in our town. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. How to make our church more efficient. 8. Is modern Christian testimony as effective as it might be? 9. The best way to promote Christian giving. 10. What can our class do for the temperance cause? 11. What can our class do for world-wide missions? 12. Are Christians to-day happier than non-Christians? |
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IV. ROOTS AND FRUITS.

This is a pictorial way of presenting the truths of the quarter. Draw a tree upon a large sheet of paper or the blackboard, giving one-third of the space to the ground, shown in cross section. Color the leaves green, the trunk dark brown, the ground light brown. Prepare circles of brightly colored paper which are to be pinned to the



ground section for the roots. Letter the roots plainly, each indicating one of the sources of a noble Christian character, corresponding to one of the lessons, thus: *S.O.* (= starting out); *B.* (= Bible); *P.* (= prayer); *O.* (= obedience); *G.* (= growth); *H.* (= helpfulness); *C.W.* (= church work); *S.* (= speech); *G.* (= giving); *F.E.* (= fighting evil); *M.* (= missions). Letter the fruits, indicating the results of Christian living, thus: *H.* (= happiness); *I.* (= influence); *Pc.* (= peace); *Pr.* (= purity); *S.* (= strength); *K.* (= knowledge); *L.* (= love); *H.* (= heaven); *E.L.* (= eternal life). Of course the teacher may vary these and increase them at his pleasure. The tree will be placed before the class. In a box are the "roots," which the pupils will take up at random one at a time, interpret the initials (with the teacher's help if necessary), and pin them to the picture at the proper places. Next the "fruits," which are in another box, will be taken up in the same way and put in position. The teacher and class will discuss each "root" and "fruit" as it is added to the picture.

V. A BIBLE HUNT.

Ask the pupils, a week in advance, to copy on slips of paper which you will give them one Bible text appropriate to each lesson of the quarter. In addition, assign to each pupil one of the lessons for him to provide with Bible quotations, as many as he can find. He is to write them out on many-colored slips which you will give him. In the class each will read his verses on the lesson assigned him, and the others will add their verses on that lesson. As each slip is read it will be handed to an assistant (one of the parents, perhaps), who will pin the slips together, finally throwing the chain of verses around the pupil's neck. Thus proceed with all the lessons.



FOURTH QUARTER.

STORIES OF THE PATRIARCHS FROM ABRAHAM TO JOSEPH.

GENESIS.

OCTOBER 6 — DECEMBER 29, 1918.

LESSON I. — October 6.

ABRAM LEAVING HOME. — Genesis 12:1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be thou a blessing.* — GENESIS 12:2.

Devotional Reading : Heb. 11 : 1-10.

Additional Material for Teachers : Gen. 11 : 27-32 ; Heb. 11 : 8-10.

Primary and Junior Topic : Abram Obeying God.

Primary Memory Verse : All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do and be obedient. — Ex. 24 : 7.

Intermediate Topic : Leaving Home.

Memory Verse : Gen. 12 : 1, 2.

Senior and Adult Topic : Heeding the Call to a Life of Service.

Additional Material : Mark 10 : 42-45 ; Acts 13 : 1-4 ; 26 : 15-19.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"It is remarkable that so large a portion of Scripture, especially in the earlier part of it, should consist of biography. God has revealed his purpose somewhat after the manner of a philanthropist when he shows us pictures of rescued children, first as they were, and then as they have become." — *W. G. Blaikie, D.D.*

A man who has been standing before us for almost 4000 years is worthy of most careful study.

The lesson becomes more real if we place before our class two maps of the travels of Abraham, one of them of the lands in his day, the other of the same lands as they are to-day with the modern roads of travel, and people who now inhabit the same countries.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Abraham. From the City of Destruction to the Promised Land.

- I. ABRAHAM, THE HERO OF FAITH.
See Heb. 11 : 8-10.
- II. ABRAHAM IN TRAINING FOR HIS GREAT MISSION.
- III. THE CALL OF ABRAHAM TO GO TO THE PROMISED LAND.
- IV. THE GLORIOUS PROMISES.
- V. LEAVING HOME.
- VI. VIEWING THE PROMISED LAND.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Dr. Matheson's *Representative Men*,
"Abraham the Cosmopolitan." Whar-
ton's *Women of the Old Testament*.
Robert Tuck's *Revelation by Character*,



THE GREAT PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT.
(The land of the Pharaohs.)

"Abraham." *Heroes of Israel*, by Dr. Blaikie. Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. 1. Geikie's *Old Testament Characters*. H. C. Tomkins' *Abraham and His Age*.

Commentaries on Genesis, as American Com., etc.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Where was Abraham born?
Where was his early home?
With what influences was he surrounded?
Why did he emigrate?
What advantages in making his home in Palestine?
Draw a mental portrait of Abraham.
What good influences has he bestowed on the world?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time.—Abraham lived about 2000 B.C. in the times of Hammurabi, the famous Babylonian king.

Place.—Abraham was a native of Ur of the Chaldees, now called Mugheir, on

the west bank of the Euphrates, 140 miles S.E. of the site of old Babylon.

Haran, where he lived for a few years, was a city of Mesopotamia, on a branch of the Euphrates, and on the great road from Nineveh to Syria.

Sichem, and several towns in Palestine.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Trench's *Poems*, "The Conversion of Abraham." Lowell's *Present Crisis*, "We too must pilgrims be." Francis Quarles' *Divine Fancies*.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Abraham, Lippi.

The Call of Abraham, Doré,* Raphael, Von Schnorr.

Abraham Sojourning in the Land of Canaan, Doré,* Hoct, Zuccarelli.

* In Wilde's Bible Pictures.

I. ABRAHAM, THE HERO OF FAITH. GREATHEART, -- is "the most commanding figure in the history from Adam to Moses."

He stands at the fountain head of a stream of descendants that flows 4000 years without a break. There is no other case like it in all history. The Jews are among us, testifying to the divine promises to Abraham; and they are waiting for their home in Palestine.

His Name was first Abram. "Exalted Father," but changed later in a vision from God to Abraham, "Father of a Multitude." Read Heb. 11:8-10.

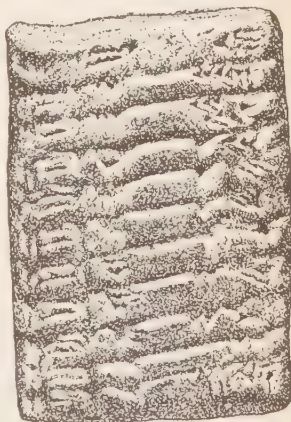
His Ancestry. We notice in the first verses of chapter 6, many centuries after the beginning of the human race, two expressions, "sons of God," those who worshipped the one true God, and "the daughters of men," who worshipped idols. These show into what two great classes the race of men had become clearly distinguished and confirmed. These two lines and types have continued not only through the entire Bible history, but to this day.

Evidently Abraham was one of the line who worshipped the one true God, while living among idolaters in Ur. He was "strong in will to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

His Birthplace was Ur of the Chaldees, the ruins of which are now called Mugheir, a mound on the western bank of the Euphrates, 120 miles north of the Persian Gulf; though in Abraham's time it was situated on the Gulf. "This land was of no great extent, being little if at all larger than Scotland, but it was the richest of Asia." — Sayce.

The city was a great maritime emporium, a walled town, with a high civilization and a large commerce; situated in "a marvellously rich country, said to be the original home of the wheat-plant, and famous for its dates and other fruits." — R. Payne Smith.

Literature of Abraham's Day. In the Louvre at Paris there is a monument by Hammurabi of Abraham's time. It is of black diorite, nearly ten feet high, with a portrait of the king and with very fine cuneiform inscriptions. This was found at Susa, the capital of Old Persia, in 1901. On it are inscribed laws resembling in many respects the laws of Leviticus. "One striking fact must be noted: The general intelligence of the times implied by the



Babylonian Schoolbook in the Time of Abraham.

Multiplication table, $18 \times 1 = 18$, etc. (From Clay's *Light on the Old Testament*, by permission.)

1. Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

very nature and purpose of this stela. It affirms that it was set up in the public place of the city, in order that the people might come and read the laws of the land and know their rights under them." — *F. L. Thompson, D.D.* Long before this, according to Rogers, "Civilization had reached a high point, and men were able to write down their thoughts and deeds in intelligible language and permanent form."

In the midst of an idolatrous city Abraham lived and grew up amid heathen immorality. "The remains make disclosures regarding the worship of the gods, which must shock even those who are familiar with the immoralities frequently fostered by heathen religions." — *Marcus Dods.*

These influences were so overwhelmingly strong that the little light of the "sons of God," while it might not be blown out, would have little opportunity of shining round the world. There was a work for true religion that could not be done there.

II. ABRAHAM IN TRAINING FOR HIS GREAT MISSION. The modern call for "preparedness" was just as essential to Abraham as to any one of us. For seventy years he was being trained in Ur of the Chaldees before he was fully prepared.

Abraham's Difficult Environment. Abraham was a good man in a worldly environment. Whatever he did in the moral and religious life that was better than that of those around him would make him unpopular. The atmosphere was worldly. The whole trend of society was toward idolatry and its sensuous attractions, like the Grove of Daphne at Antioch, as seen in Lew Wallace's *Ben Hur*.

Stories of Abraham's experiences here, which, while only legends, doubtless express the actual state of things. "The 'Book of Jubilees' tells how when a boy he was filled with loathing for the vices by which he was surrounded. When only fourteen he separated himself from his father, refusing to worship idols. . . . One day when his fellow-townsmen had gone to visit a shrine, he entered their temple and destroyed seventy-two costly idols. . . . He was thrown into the fire, but God sent Gabriel to cool the flame." — *Wharton.* According to another legend the flames were extinguished by a fountain which sprang up from beneath, and the wood was changed into blossoming fruit-trees; or, as in another legend, the coals of fire were changed into a bed of roses. See Hastings' *Bib. Dic.*, 1: 17; Taylor's *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*. Compare Gideon and his breaking down the idols of his town (Judg. 6: 25-32); and the three men in the fiery furnace (Dan. 3).

Abraham lived his religion, and therefore he was opposed by those who lived the heathen life.

He listened to God's voice even in his youth, saying, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth."

"All honor the men who are willing to sink
Half their present repute for the freedom to think;
And when they have thought, be their cause strong or weak,
Will sink th' other half for the freedom to speak." — *Lowell.*

Life is full of choices and decisions as to which way to go. At every turning-point one way is wrong, and the other right. And the traveller must decide. Life equally abounds in daily and hourly decisions, acts of choice and will. It is these acts of choice which make character and determine destiny.

Compare the Greek story of Aristides the Just, who was hated by one of the Athenians because he was tired of hearing him called The Just.

"Blest is the man of high ideals,
Who fails to-day, to-morrow, and for days to come,
But never lowers his standards, nor surrenders to defeat,
Till hand and foot, till eye and ear,
Till vocal cord and tongue,
Till mind and heart are disciplined,
And all abilities of body and of soul
Are marshalled by the will
And move onward to the drum-beat of perfection."

III. THE CALL OF ABRAHAM TO A NEW LIFE. FROM THE CITY OF DESTRUCTION TO THE PROMISED LAND, v. 1. Abraham had at length come to that period in his training when he could accomplish the purpose God had planned for him. Now the Lord, Jehovah, had said unto Abram, Get thee out of

2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.

3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

The Necessity for the Migration of Abraham. It was necessary in order to realize the promise of God.

Old established customs held tenaciously by the majority of the city make it almost impossible for any one man to overcome them. Moreover it is very difficult even to see the better things clearly in such an atmosphere.

Then a new country spells opportunity. There is room for new experiments, new methods, new plans.

Many an advance can be made in a new country which would fail in an old. Emigrants often do better than at home. The new regions can work out experiments with a free hand. So it was with our Pilgrim Fathers, and they were but one example of what is going on all over the world.

The going into a new country, with its responsibilities and burdens, was a needful training for Abraham himself.

Unto a land that I will show thee, when the time comes to go and settle there. The first thing was to get away from the old influences. Later, at Haran, the place was made known.

Palestine was the best place in the whole world for this *Training-School of God*, for educating a nation in true religion, the worship of the true God, and the morals, righteousness, and character which are the essentials of the development of mankind into the true kingdom of God. It was a small, enclosed, secluded country, defended by the Mediterranean on the west, mountains on the north, deserts and the Jordan ravine on the east, and the vast Arabian desert on the south. It was sheltered as we defend a young tree from all its enemies, and it had yet sufficient contact with the other civilizations to receive all that was best in them. — *See Ellsworth Huntington's Palestine and Its Transformation.*

And that little country has never been held by a separate nation, but is waiting to be the central home of the Jews, as soon as they become Christian Jews, which they can be without disowning their Jewish rights. All the apostles and the earliest Christians were Jews as well as Christians.

Our Promised Land. Like Abraham, we have had set before us a Promised Land, a life full of all the best things earth and heaven can bestow; all that was promised to Abraham in vs. 2 and 3. All that makes heaven what it is shall be ours. Our Promised Land is a state of goodness, usefulness, spiritual life, and heaven. And for our country, what a goal, ideal, vision! It is always the land He will show us; each age brings us something new and better than the past.

"I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me."

"I know not the way I am going,
But well do I know my guide."

"So I go on not knowing. I would not if I might;
I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light.
I would rather walk with him by faith than walk alone by sight."

New Visions. "I wonder how often we realize that practically all the great humanitarian movements of our time were born in the last century; scarce one is over a hundred and twenty-five years old. Organized charity, social settlements, temperance reform, anti-slavery reform, prison reform, Young Men's Christian Associations, foreign missions, home missions, city missions, — all of them are children of the nineteenth century." — *Lyman Abbott.*

IV. THE GLORIOUS PROMISES, vs. 2, 3; and many were repeated and emphasized later in his life. Abraham had a hard duty before him, but God gave him all that was needed to uphold his faith and strengthen him to obey, while it increased his faith.

1. And I will make of thee a great nation. "He became the ancestor of a countless posterity, continuing 4000 years, and still existing."

2. I will bless thee, . . . and thou shalt be a blessing. No earthly gift can be so good as the blessing of God. And this blessing fits us to bless others, for it is more blessed to give than to receive.

4. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

3. And make thy name great, known, honored, loved, down the ages; one of the greatest powers for good in all history.

4. I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Abraham's cause was to be so identified with God's cause that whosoever favored Abraham favored God and His kingdom. So far as we are the true children of God, this is true also of us.

5. God said, Look now toward heaven and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be (11: 8). I give thee this land to inherit it (15: 5, 7). For an everlasting possession (17: 8).

6. And I will make my covenant between me and thee (17: 2), as a continual sign that God's promises will be fulfilled.

What a vision that was! Others have had visions of better countries, of ideal peoples, — Plato's Republic, the Greek Hesperides, Moore's Utopia, Bacon's New Atlantic, the Spanish Eldorado, but none will begin to compare with the vision and promise given to Abraham, which will be completed only in the New Jerusalem.

We, too, have great and precious promises, in Jesus Christ, of better things and a better country than Abraham had.

V. THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE PROMISED LAND. The first division of the journey was led by Terah the father of Abraham (11: 31), the head of the family,



Traveling through the Desert.

including Lot, the nephew of Abraham, Sarai, Abraham's wife and half sister; and others, the unmentioned members of the family, and with the servants of those mentioned in verse 5.

Some think that the death of Haran, Abraham's brother, caused Terah to turn more fully to his ancestral God, as Mr. Durant was led by the death of his only son to a full consecration to God, and to the building of Wellesley College.

They migrated five or six hundred miles northwest up the Euphrates, on the road to Palestine. The desert prevented them from going directly there. They would pass Babylon, now in ruins, and all the towns on the river now in the Bagdad and Aleppo districts. Here they remained five years till Terah died. Haran was a very fertile country, and during his residence here Abraham gathered no little substance, flocks, herds and tents (13: 5).

But Haran was not the best place for developing the true religion.

The Second Migration, vs. 4-7, was not of a mere household, but of a growing tribe of persons and retainers, of whom Abraham was the chief. So Abram departed, with all that he had (v. 5), and into the land of Canaan they came. Canaan — "Lowlands" — was originally the low land on the Mediterranean coast, but afterwards included the whole of Palestine to the Jordan.

Trace the Journey on a modern as well as a Biblical map, along the great routes of travel, through Carchemish, through the well-known Damascus, the oldest inhabited city in the world; crossing the Jordan by one of the great caravan routes, which cross the river either north or south of the Sea of Galilee; thence to Sichem

5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land.

7. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

8. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, *having* Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

9. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

(later called Sychar, where Jesus talked with the woman of Samaria) unto the plain of Moreh, rather "the oak grove" in the fertile valley of Sychar.

But "the promise of the land to Abraham's seed was made in the face of the fact that the heathen Canaanite was then in possession." — *Am. Com.* There was much to overcome before the descendants of Abraham could take possession. Hence the Lord confirmed His promise. *Unto thy seed will I give this land* (v. 7). And in order to express his faith and to take possession, he builded an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

VI. VIEWING THE PROMISED LAND. vs. 6-9. As we have seen, Abraham first viewed Sychar, the rich and fertile plain between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim, and Samaria. After a time he went to a high place between Bethel and Hai, three miles east of Bethel. Here he builded an altar to Jehovah and worshipped Him. After this he journeyed toward the south. "Wherever Abraham fixed his abode he built an altar to Jehovah, and Canaan became gradually dotted over with the marks of possession in the name of the Lord."

Two thousand years later the same purpose that moved Abraham filled the heart and life of St. Paul. "Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).

"Men say 'Human nature does not change.' That is a lie. It does change. It ought to change more and faster, but it changes. Do not hasten to be in despair about the human race. It is not doing as well as it ought; far from it, but it could do worse if it tried, and we must not let it try. The little girl prayed wisely who said, 'O God, make me good; and if at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again.'"

In Whittier's beautiful poem, "The Chapel of the Hermits," he represents one as seeking the Holy Land, and finding at last that

"Oh friend, we need not rock nor sand,
Nor storied stream of Morning-land.
The heavens are glassed in Merrimac,
What more could Jordan answer back?"

"This maple ridge shall Horeb be,
Yon green-banked lake our Galilee.

Our common daily life divine,
And every land a Palestine."

"Henceforth my heart shall sigh no more,
For olden time and holier shore;
God's love and blessing then and there
Are now, and here, and everywhere."

LESSON II. — October 13.

ABRAM HELPING LOT. — Genesis 13:5-11; 14:14-16.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *A friend loveth at all times;*

And a brother is born for adversity. — PROV. 17:17.

Devotional Reading: Rom. 12:9-21.

Additional Material for Teachers: Gen. 12:10-14:24; 18:16-33; 19:29.

Primary and Junior Topic : Abram Giving Lot the First Choice.

Lesson Material : Gen. 13 : 5-13.

Memory Verse : As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. — Luke 6 : 31.

Intermediate Topic : The Greatness of Unselfishness.

Memory Verse : Rom. 12 : 10b.

Additional Material : 1 Sam. 23 : 15-18 ; 2 Sam. 1 : 26 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 5.

Intermediate and Senior Topic : Loyalty to One's Own Family.

Additional Material : Mark 7 : 9-13 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 3-8 ; 1 John 3 : 17, 18.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

How I use pictures in my Class.
 "Some two years ago," says Amy Jones, "I began teaching a class of small boys, nine to eleven years of age. Seeing their pleasure over any kind of picture illustrating the lesson, I cast about for a suitable selection of pictures. . . . Ever since I began using them I have found them very satisfactory."

Wilde's Bible pictures are excellent (120 Boylston St., Boston). Price one cent each, or for the year 60¢.

"We also study manners and customs of the Biblical peoples — modes of worship and of dress, living, and travel. I accompany the pictures with a map, locating the places mentioned in lesson and picture."

For these Underwood's stereoscopic pictures of Palestine, though more costly, are very effective. Every Sunday School should have a set of these kept in the schoolroom.

"It is not enough, however, that they see the pictures ; I always pass them around the class, letting each have a look in turn. I select the best pictures, mount them permanently, and keep them on exhibition throughout the year. We never get tired of them. I find that pictures are a valuable means of conveying religious instruction." — *From the Methodist Sunday School Journal.*

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Abraham's error in going down into Egypt ; and his deliverance.

The various places in which Abraham lived.

Abraham gives Lot his choice of land.

Lot pitching his tent towards Sodom, and its results.

Abraham's rescue of Lot, and the dwellers in Sodom.

Abraham's prayer for Sodom.

Lot's escape from Sodom.

Destruction of Sodom.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Story of Abraham and Lot.

I. ABRAHAM FOR ONCE YIELDS TO TEMPTATION, BUT GAINS THE VICTORY.

II. ABRAHAM, THE MAN OF PEACE, GIVES THE BEST TO LOT, 13 : 5-11.

III. ABRAHAM THE MAN OF WAR, 14 : 14-16.

IV. THE STORY OF LOT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — About B.C. 1924.

Place. — Just before this lesson Abraham went down into Egypt on account of a famine in Palestine. Then he returned to Bethel, 12 miles north of Jerusalem ; but after the separation from Lot he moved again, and made his home in Hebron, 20 miles south of Jerusalem.

Lot moved from Bethel toward Sodom and finally dwelt in the city.

Contemporaries. — Hammurabi, king of Babylon, identified with Amraphel. Chedorlaomer.

Monuments. — Hammurabi's stone monument 8 feet high, with his portrait and a code of laws.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Genesis. Dr. Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel.* Dr. Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible.* Tuck's *Revelation by Character.* Alexander Whyte's *Bible Characters.* Tomkins' *Abraham and His Age.*

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Mrs. Gatty's *Parables from Nature*, "Imperfect Instruments." Bulwer's *Pilgrims of the Rhine*, "The Journey of the Virtues." Professor Drummond's *The Greatest Thing in the World.*

Contrast in *Pilgrim's Progress* the loving union of Christian, Faithful, and Hopeful, and the straying of Christian into By-Path Meadow.

Longfellow's *Ladder of St. Augustine* gives an illustration of how Abraham rose above his sin in Egypt.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Abraham and Melchisedek, Raphael, Steuerbondt.

Abraham and the Three Angels, Doré,* Raphael, Rembrandt.*
Destruction of Sodom, Doré,* Raphael, Rubens.

Flight of Lot, Hoct,* Doré.*

I. ABRAHAM YIELDS TO TEMPTATION FOR ONCE: BUT GAINS THE VICTORY. With the glorious promises fresh in his mind, in our last lesson we left Abraham worshipping God at various places as he moved toward the South. But he was not yet ready to settle down. He must look over the extent of his promised inheritance, the land flowing with milk and honey. Hence he continued to move toward the South, referring not so much to the direction as to the country called "The South." This was the most sandy and barren part of the Promised Land. In addition to this there was at that time a grievous famine in this part of Palestine. It was Abraham's and Lot's first experience of famine.

Instead of returning to the north Abraham went on to Egypt, which he had never seen. It was the country of plenty, which had already attained a high degree of civilization, full of heathenism, worldliness, and luxury, which has a great fascination and charm to one who first enters its enchanted circle.

The Temptation. Here Abraham yielded to a dangerous temptation. Sarah his wife, although 65 years old, was a very attractive and charming woman. Such cases are not unknown. For instance, "the Countess of Warwick has been a beauty for two generations, and she is now one of the most beautiful women in England and a grandmother." — *Boston Herald, October, 1911.*

"For three generations Ninon de l'Enclos fascinated the youths of France. When she was 72, the Abbé Bernis fell madly in love with her, won by her fascination, beauty, and great wit."

In *Prue and I*, to one who looked through Mr. Titbottom's spectacles, his aged and wrinkled grandmother appeared as a Madonna, and "I have yet heard of no queen, no belle, no imperial beauty whom in grace and brilliancy and persuasive courtesy she might not have surpassed."

Abraham feared that the Pharaoh might kill him in order to take Sarah into his harem.

"Possibly," says Professor Dods, "he may have heard the ugly story which has recently been deciphered from an old papyrus, and which tells how one of the Pharaohs, acting on the advice of his princes, sent armed men to fetch a beautiful woman and make away with her husband."

To escape this danger Abraham persuaded Sarah to represent herself as his sister. He told a formal truth, for she was his half-sister as well as his wife, but it was real falsehood. The Pharaoh was attracted to her, and he took her as an unmarried woman to his home.

"A mysterious sickness fell upon Pharaoh and his house, which, it must be assumed, aroused his suspicions, and so led to inquiries which resulted in the discovery of the truth." — *Driver.* The fact that he had taken away the wife of one whom he would have for an ally, spoiled his plans. He blamed Abraham, but he made what amends he could, and sent him safely back to Palestine, with Lot, and all the wealth they had gained.

Abraham yielded to temptation. What he did was not merely a falsehood, but was also a failure in his faith in God. Let him that hath never yielded to temptation cast the first stone at Abraham. "For in many things," says James, "we all stumble." "If we say that we have no sin," says John, "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." So Bunyan's Pilgrim strayed into By-Path Meadow, and barely escaped Giant Despair.

The Real Lesson for us is the victory of Abraham in his battle with sin. He was like Peter who denied his Lord, but by deep penitence and by Christ's loving forgiveness, and the baptisms of the Holy Spirit, became one of the most useful of the apostles.

"There's a fleck of rust on a flawless blade —

On the armor of price there's one:

There's a mole on the cheek of the lovely maid —

There are spots upon the sun.

"But the blade of Damascus has succored the weak,

The shield saved a knight from a fall;

The mole is a grace on my lady's cheek —

The sun, it shines for all." — *S. A. Walker.*

Note. Abraham went from Egypt directly through the South land, even to Bethel where his tent had been at the beginning; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord (13:1-4).

Here was the place of prayer for all his people. Here was the family altar. Here was the home of worship for the families and retainers of Abraham and Lot. Here Abraham had returned to a closer walk with God.

The best possible influence around young people is a pure and religious family life. Why is it that some children of such a family wander away into paths of sin and ruin?

GEN. 13:5. And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

6. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

7. And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

8. And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: for we *be* brethren.

One reason is that every person has a power of choice, and he *must* choose for himself.

A dean of a large college told me the other day that mothers came to him with their "perfect" boys; and he had to tell them that their boys were in great danger because they must meet new temptations without being trained to make right choices. And choosing — acts of the will — makes character. How many a father wishing his son to succeed him in his business, but feeling his own superior wisdom and experience, has made all the decisions and kept all the power in his own hands, instead of training his son by putting responsibility upon him.

II. ABRAHAM, THE MAN OF PEACE, PUTS AN END TO STRIFE. 13:15-11. Abraham and Lot had both grown rich and prosperous, as a natural result of righteousness, and morals, and diligence, and skill. Herds of cattle, asses, camels, retainers, tents, etc.

6. And the land was not able to bear them; *i.e.* the land did not furnish space enough for the numerous herds to graze. "The country was an open common. It could not be held by any title. Everyone drove his cattle where he could find the best grazing for them. This absence of law to define and protect real estates would naturally open the way for jealousy and strife, and the strong would have an advantage over the weak." — *Jacobus*. The ownership of land by many individuals is a great preventive of strife.

There was a strife between the herdsmen of Abraham and of Lot. There was no strife among the owners. And the Canaanite, "lowlanders," and the Perizzite, "highlanders," dwellers on the hills and the mountains among which Bethel was situated. These tribes are mentioned (1) to show one reason why there was not room around Bethel for both Abraham and Lot; and (2) perhaps to show that Abraham felt that the eyes of the heathen were upon him to see how his religion would lead its disciples to live and act under trying circumstances.

8. And Abram said unto Lot, "with the insight of a statesman." As the older, as the richer, as the more favored of God, as the better and more generous man, Abraham speaks first. **Let there be no strife . . . between me and thee . . . for we be brethren**, in kinship, in love, in interests, and especially in religion. If we are brethren, let us act like brothers, and not like enemies. The love between brethren of the same family or church should overcome the danger of strife. Stop every such quarrel in the beginning, before a match's flame becomes a burning city, or a little leak a devastating flood.

Then Abraham gave Lot his choice of all the available lands. These lands were common to all. No one could claim the use of more land than he could use. So Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east; and they separated themselves the one from the other.

Abraham remained in the less promising pastures of the hill country, but, as it proved, the safer region. Lot's was a selfish choice, and it proved a sad one. Abraham's love and service of God was shown by his love and generosity to man. This act not only proceeded from his character, but strengthened and improved it. Acts of love to man increase our love to God.

Scriptural Sayings Illustrated in Abraham. "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matt. 5:9). "A soft answer turneth away wrath" (Prov. 15:1). "In honor preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10). "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another" (John 13:34). "Charity suffereth long and is kind," etc. (1 Cor. 13:4-8). "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18, 21). "Walk in love" (Eph. 5:2). "Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. 13:1). "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren

9. *Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.*

10. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

11. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

GEN. 14:14. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

15. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

16. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

to dwell together in unity," etc. (Psalm 133). "Seek first the kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33, 34).

Pitching his tent toward Sodom, probably in the southern part of the Dead Sea, now covered with water. Then full of slime pits. Sodom was an intensely wicked city. Soon Lot made his home in the city itself. No one can pitch his tent toward Sodom with impunity. He will be tainted by his associations; he will gradually grow worse and worse, till he dwells in Sodom itself, and will suffer from the fate of Sodom. The true principle is to keep as far from evil as possible. He who keeps bad company pitches his tent toward Sodom. He who indulges in doubtful pleasures pitches his tent toward Sodom. He who pitches his tent toward Sodom will soon probably find himself in the city. Then destruction is near at hand.

The Greatness of Unselfishness. "Go back," Norah had said to him, "you have done all these things for yourself, and you have been beaten to your knees, — Go back now and do something for others. You have been brave for yourself, — be brave now for others." — *Hugh Walpole*.

III. ABRAHAM, THE MAN OF WAR, 14:14-16. *Lot's Imperfections.* Lot was a good man at heart. We are told in 2 Peter that "righteous Lot" was "sore distressed" by the lascivious life of the wicked, "For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds" (2 Pet. 2:7, 8).

Not only had Lot less character and fewer and weaker virtues than his uncle, but he fell into serious errors and temptations, from which one of Abraham's character and piety would have escaped and passed on unharmed. A man who deliberately goes into temptation, and lives among vile men and women, unless it be to give himself to making them better, is sure to be contaminated. Abraham would have built an altar in Sodom.

Illustration. Rappacini's Daughter. In his *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Hawthorne tells a weird story of a chemist named Rappacini, who was investigating the nature of poisons, and had a charming garden in which every plant and flower was poisonous. His beautiful daughter lived in this deadly atmosphere till her whole nature became poisonous, so that at length flowers withered at her touch, insects flitting before her fell dead in her breath, and even spiders and reptiles perished, scorched and convulsed by her presence. And a young student who, attracted by her beauty, walked with her in that Eden of poisons was at length astonished and enraged to find himself, by this partial abode there, so impregnated with them, that even the flies and spiders of his room withered in death when he breathed upon them. His whole body was filled with the noxious influences; his touch was a poison and not a healing touch.

Sodom was attacked by four kings from the north and east, who ravaged it and its sister cities. Lot was carried away with the others, and suffered the loss of his family and all the riches that led him to Sodom, by the overwhelming, ravaging army from the Eastern conquerors, who, with the prisoners and spoils, hastily marched

toward their own home land, and did not stop for rest till they had reached Holah, near Damascus.

One of the captives escaped and hastened to Hebron, 20 miles south of Jerusalem, to tell Abraham what had befallen Lot and the cities of the plain. He immediately armed his trained servants (he was prepared to defend himself and those dependent upon him) to the number of 318, and pursued the marauders to Dan near the source of the Jordan on the northern border of Palestine. Here he divided his forces and surprised the pillagers by an attack in the darkness (like Gideon and his 300). They could not know how large an army had come upon them suddenly from different directions; and they fled. Abraham brought back Lot and his family, and all the spoil from Sodom.

The king of Sodom asked Abraham to let him have the persons but to take all the spoils himself. But Abraham refused. For he had sworn by "the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich."

Thus Abraham proved his unselfishness again.

Abraham was a man of peace, and this brilliant act of war and the victory seem at first unnatural and unexpected. But when a man of peace fights, he fights for a

Cause, a Principle, for the help of the weak, and not for his own advantage. And Abraham was a hero long before this, a moral hero, the highest kind of hero; he had fought greater moral battles than this one for Lot; but this act brought his heroism into clearer knowledge.

II. THE STORY OF LOT AND SODOM. THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM,

Gen. 13: 20-19: 29. Lot, after his bitter experience and rescue by his uncle Abraham, returned to Sodom. Here were his family, who probably did not wish to leave the city to settle on a farm. Here was his home; here his property, and many neighbors and acquaintances.

Abraham's Prayer. Three angels in the form of men came to Abraham's home, and promised that Sarah should have a son. Two of them went on toward Sodom to warn Lot and his family to escape from the impending destruction of the city, "because their sin is very grievous."

Abraham, fearing lest Lot should be overwhelmed in the impending disaster, prayed to the Lord Jehovah.

Jehovah said, "I will go down now and see."

It suggests Lowell's "Parable Poem," beginning,

"Said Christ our Lord, I will go and see
How the men my brothers believe in me,"—

what they had done with his poor brothers, how they treated the bodies and souls of those he had left in their care.

"Then Christ sought out an artisan,
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man;
And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

"These he set in the midst of them,
And as they drew back their garment hem
For fear of defilement, 'Lo, here,' said he,
'The images ye have made of me.'"



From a photograph by Wilson.

Abraham's Oak at Hebron.

Traditional place where Abraham entertained the three men under the oak.

Abraham prayed, — If there be 50 righteous found in the city, wilt thou spare the city? The Lord said, Yes. If 45? Yes. If 40? Yes. If 30? Yes. If 20? Yes. If 10? Yes. But there were not even ten. And no ten men of the Lot type could save such a city. It was possible to save Sodom if 50 good men could be found, because fifty men with a living, active piety and zeal could so improve the city morals and character that it would not be necessary to destroy the city to prevent it from infecting the whole region with its deadly vices.

Lot was told of the coming destruction, and urged to escape with his family, early in the morning. Only four were willing to go. They did not believe there was

danger. The two angels urged them on, — Escape for your lives. They lingered, and the angels laid hold of his hand, and of his wife and two daughters. But Lot's wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

"Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants."

Physical Cause of the Destruction of the Cities of the Plain.

The region was full of slime, of bitumen pits (Gen. 14:10). The whole region abounds, in a peculiar manner, with bitumen, sulphur, and salt. It is probable that the walls of the city and of the dwellings were permeated and cemented together with bitumen. This is confirmed by the "recently discovered evidence of the use of bitumen in the construction of ancient Jericho." — *Prof. G. F. Wright*. The depression of this region is "one of the most remarkable geological phenomena of the world." Something like it exists near Salt Lake City, recently brought to light by the investigations of Mr. G. H. Gilbert, of the United States Geological Survey. The surface of the Dead Sea is 1292 feet below that of the Mediterranean, 40 or 50 miles distant, while the depth in some places is 1200 feet more. "The whole region about the Dead Sea has every appearance of being an exhausted 'oil district,' in which the reservoirs of gas and oil were long ago tapped by natural agencies." "The pressure in some of the gas wells is almost beyond comprehension, being sometimes 700 or 800 pounds to the square inch, — a pressure five times as great as that in the cylinder of a locomotive engine doing its best work. A jet of mingled gas and oil from such a well when ignited presents a wonderful appearance. Its roar can be heard for many miles, and its smoke rises like that of a volcano. At times the burning liquid falls down in destructive showers over a wide area. In the oil regions near the south end of the Caspian Sea the pressure is so enormous that it is impossible to tube the wells after they are drilled." — *Professor Wright*.

"In a narrative now before me, and which occurred a few years ago in the oil district of Petrolia, Canada, I read that a borehole struck a reservoir of gas, which rushed upward with explosive force, carrying before it a large quantity of petroleum. The gas almost immediately took fire, and formed a tall column of flame, while the burning petroleum spread over the ground and ignited tanks of the substance in the vicinity. In this way a space of about fifteen acres was burned. The air flowing toward the eruption caused a whirlwind, and carried the



Lot Leaving Sodom.

From an old print.

dense smoke high into the air, and threw down burning bitumen all around." — *Sir J. W. Dawson*.

1. See the description in Whittier's *Poems*, "The Cities of the Plain."

"The warning was spoken; the righteous had gone,
And the proud ones of Sodom were feasting alone.
Hark the growl of the thunder, the quaking of earth!
Woe, woe to the worship, and woe to the mirth!
The black sky has opened, — there's flame in the air, —
The red arm of vengeance is lifted and bare!
Then the shriek of the dying rose wild where the song
And the low tone of love had been whispered along;
For the fierce flames went lightly o'er palace and bower,
Like the red tongues of demons to blast and devour."

See also Bulwer's description of the destruction of Pompeii, A.D. 70.

2. *Illustration*. In a sermon on "The Slime Pits of Sodom" the headings are: (1) The Slime Pits of the Streets. (2) The Slime Pits of the Printing Press: Reading that Ensnares. (3) The Slime Pits of Sensuality: Pleasures that Kill. (4) The Slime Pits of Business: Commercial Dishonesty. (5) The Slime Pits of the Saloon: the Dangers of Gambling and Tippling." — *Rev. E. F. See*.

3. *Listen to Christ's warning, REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE*. Look not back. Make no delay in escaping from sin. Let no regrets at the pleasures of sin stop your onward course to the place of a holy life and heaven.

She did not merely turn her head and look while hasting away, but stopped behind, and the fiery storm and eruption of liquid saline mud overtook her, "and she became a pillar of salt." "Just as some of the victims at Pompeii stumbled in their flight, and were buried under the ashes, which still keep the outline of their figures, so Lot's wife was covered with the half-liquid, slimy mud."

4. Righteousness is the only hope of any country. See Deut. 28-30.

5. *Listen to Christ's warning, REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE*. It would be possible to save it. But they must be strong, bold, energetic, wise, earnest, truly good men, filled with the love and the life of God.

LESSON III. — October 20.

ABRAHAM GIVING ISAAC TO GOD. — Genesis 22:1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I will give him unto Jehovah all the days of his life.* — 1 SAMUEL 1:11.

Devotional Reading: Luke 14:25-35.

Additional Material for Teachers: Gen. 15:1-6; 18:9-15; 21:1-12.

Primary and Junior Topic: Abram Helping Lot.

Lesson Material: Gen. 14:11-24.

Primary Memory Verse: As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. — Luke 6:31.

Junior Memory Verse: 1 Cor. 13:4, 5.

Intermediate Topic: Giving Our Best to God.

Additional Material: Matt. 10:37-39.

Senior and Adult Topic: The Higher Conception of Sacrifice.

Additional Material: 1 Sam. 1:9-23; Matt. 10:34-39; 2 Tim. 3:14, 15.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson may well be called Abraham's Examination Test in the School of Life. He passes his examination on the subject of Faith in God's Promises.

Abraham was growing old, but he also was growing better, wiser, in service, courtesy, in faith, and all the virtues. As the hero of faith, the ideal for all the ages, there was one more test required. To-day's study is the story of how Abraham stood the test, and took the degree of Faith, *summa cum Laude*, that is "with the highest praise and honor."

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Isaac was born about B.C. 1903 (Beecher) or 1896 (Ussher), when Abraham was 100 years old.

The testing of Abraham was when Isaac was grown to be a young man.

Place. — Beersheba, in the southern part of Palestine, 27 miles southwest of Hebron (where Abraham had lived at the time of the destruction of Sodom), and 45 miles from the Land of Moriah, in or near the site of Jerusalem. The hill Moriah of that city was the site of the temple.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The life and character of Isaac.
 How old was he when his faith and that of Abraham was tested?
 What is faith?
 Tell the story of his wooing and marriage.
 Why was Abraham tested?
 Did God want him to slay his son?
 How is our faith sometimes tried?
 The difference between tempting and testing.
 What did God ask Abraham to do?
 Why did God ask him to do it?
 In what spirit did Abraham respond?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Genesis, such as Dods' *Expositor's Bible*, and the *American Commentary*.

The books that give an account of Abraham, Isaac, etc., as reported in the two previous lessons.

The Sunday School Times for March 1, 1913, is especially good on this lesson.

For information regarding human sacrifice a detailed account and history of the practice will be found in Baring-Gould's *Origin of Belief*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, "The Lamp of Sacrifice." Compare the scene with the touching passage in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus. Also with the *Iphigenia in Aulia* of Euripides, 1. 1540, etc. Tennyson's "The Victim" gives a similar picture. N. P. Willis' *Poems*, "Abraham's Sacrifice."

THE LESSON IN ART.

The Trial of Abraham's Faith, Doré,* Allori,* Rembrandt, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Sodoma.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Abraham Giving Isaac to God, and Its Outcome.

- I. THE STORY OF ABRAHAM AND HIS PROPOSED SACRIFICE, vs. 1-14.
- II. ABRAHAM'S MESSAGE TO MODERN TIMES.
- III. ONE PHASE OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH THAT WE NEED.

I. AND it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*.

I. THE STORY OF ABRAHAM AND HIS SACRIFICE OF ISAAC, Gen. 22: 1-14. Several years had passed since the birth of Isaac, for he had grown to young manhood under the deep religious life of his home, and all the quiet influences of a country life near the town of Beersheba in the southern part of Palestine.

Eight different times the covenant promises were made to Abraham, under varying circumstances during a course of years, enlarged, emphasized, reinforced, illustrated by symbols and ceremonies.

First Promise,	Gen. 12: 1-3.
Second Promise,	12: 7.
Third Promise,	13: 14-17.
Fourth Promise,	15: 1, 5, 7, 18.

Fifth Promise,	Gen. 17: 1-10, 19.
Sixth Promise,	18: 18, 19.
Seventh Promise,	21: 12.
Eighth Promise,	22: 16-18.

All of these were a training in faith in God. Now after a long period of this quiet life, God gave him one more test of faith to complete his faith for all time.

1. After these things. Clearly after chapter 21, because Isaac was grown up. "Now it seemed that the evening of his life was to be serene and unclouded, and that his sun would go down in peace. Suddenly there shot out from the calm sky a bolt more terrific than any that had yet appeared, and in his old age Abraham was exposed to a trial in comparison of which all that he had hitherto experienced seemed light indeed." — *Dr. Blaikie*.

That God did tempt Abraham. "Tempt" here is misleading. It means "test" or "prove." God never "tempts" any one (James 1: 12-15). He tests them to show what their character is, and to develop the good in them into better and larger good. Satan tempts a person to do something wrong, with the purpose of leading him to yield and do the wrong.

Most of our progress is made by small daily steps. We are making choices and decisions every hour, and it is these which are making character, and are preparing us for right decisions in the decisive crises of our lives. The peaceful daily life is quite as essential to our growth and progress as are the storms and darkness and troubles which come to all. The Good is often the Golden Stairway to the Best.

God said unto him, Abraham; a direct communication by night (v. 3) and probably in a vision (as in 15: 1).

2. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Abraham replied, Behold here I am.

God said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest [the choicest of all his possessions], and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

The Strange Command. In order to understand this event we must realize the circumstances, customs, and influences in which he was placed. He lived in a country where human sacrifices were common. He dwelt among idolaters, who, to ward off evil, were accustomed to sacrifice to their idols their choicest treasures, their most beloved sons and daughters. "We learn from many sources that the most atrocious child-sacrifice was a prominent feature in the public religion of the Phœnicians, both in their Palestine homeland and in Carthage." — *W. M. Nesbit, in Hastings' B. D.* They made their children to "pass through the fire," burned them to death, as is said of Ahaz (2 Chron. 28 : 3; see 2 Kings 17 : 31; Ezek. 16 : 21).

"This horrible custom was grounded in part on the notion that children were the dearest possession of their parents (who should offer their best to God), and in part that as pure and innocent beings, they were the offerings of atonement most certain to pacify the anger of deity." — *G. Rawlinson, Story of the Nations.*

Both Æschylus and Euripides in their dramas tell how King Agamemnon, at the siege of Troy, sacrificed his daughter, the beautiful Iphigenia, to save the Greek army, and how at first she implores her father to save her from this awful death, but when she sees how much is at stake, "This daughter of a line of heroes shows herself heroic; she will be the victim whom the goddess Diana demands."

Tennyson's "The Victim" shows a similar picture in the land of Odin and Thor.

"A plague upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low.
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,
For on them broke the savage foe;
So thick they died the people cried
'The gods are moved against the land.'
The Priest in horror about his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:

"'Help us from famine
And plague and strife!
What would you have of us?
Human life?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
(Answer, O answer)
We give you his life.'"

The king was compelled for the sake of the people to give for the sacrifice his dearest — his only son, or his beloved wife. Their son was on the altar about to be slain when the mother

"Shrieking, 'I am his dearest, I —
I am his dearest!' rushed on the knife."

Abraham may have feared lest the idolaters should imagine that he did not love his God as truly and deeply as they did their idols when they sacrificed their children to them.

On the other hand, might not the idolaters ask, as Satan asked concerning Job, — Doth Job fear God for naught? Look at the wealth his God hath given him!

Abraham may have asked himself, Do I love God as much as I ought?

The Supreme Test of Abraham's Faith. There could be no greater proof of Abraham's faith in God than this:

1. He was to give his son, the inheritor of the promises, — the most precious of his possessions.

2. Giving up his son to death seemed to make it impossible for the promises of God to be fulfilled. For the promises were to be fulfilled through Isaac (Gen. 21 : 12); all the blessings to be bestowed upon the world to the end of time would vanish if Isaac perished.

3. It was possible that God would interfere and save Isaac from death, as in fact God did deliver him, when their faith was proved for all time.

4. We are told in Hebrews 11 : "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

The Journey. 3. And Abraham rose up early. An early start on a journey is all-important in the East. Thus would the traveller avoid the heat of the day in the

3. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

4. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

5. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

6. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

7. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

8. And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

open sun. Saddled, girdled, to carry the wood. Clave the wood. He carried the wood with him, in order to have that which was dry. We can picture to our minds the little cavalcade. Abraham and Isaac leading in silent sadness.

"The morning sun rose bright and clear,
On Abraham's tent it gayly shone,
And all was bright and cheerful there,
All save the patriarch's heart alone."

The two servants guiding the ass with his load of wood, a vessel of living coals, and a knife. The distance from Beersheba to the mountains of Moriah, the site of

Jerusalem, was about 45 miles. When they came on the third day to within about three miles, Abraham halted the cavalcade. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder, and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. While they were walking

Isaac spoke: My father!

Abraham: Here am I, my son.

Isaac: Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

Abraham: My son, God will provide the lamb for a burnt offering.

So they went both of them together, till they came to the appointed place, where Abraham built an altar, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.



The Trial of Abraham's Faith.

9. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

11. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I.

12. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*, from me.

13. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

14. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said *to* this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

This must have required a faith and obedience in Isaac that made him the worthy successor of his father as the heir of all the promises. Isaac too was a hero of faith; "For he had looked in the face of death."

"Of course, by this time Isaac must have known and was therefore a willing sacrifice. As an adult he could have resisted and escaped. In his acceptance of the situation his faith was equally as strong as that of his father. The narrative records everything without the slightest hint of the feelings of Abraham and Isaac." — *S. S. Times*.

The Angel of the Lord from Heaven called: Abraham, Abraham!

Abraham: Here am I.

The Angel: Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

Jehovah-Jireh, The Lord will Provide, is the name Abraham gave to the place where the altar of sacrifice stood.

The wonderful way in which God provided the sacrifice, in the hour of greatest extremity, was the source of a proverb, which would comfort God's people in all ages. The nearest equivalent in English is "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." When the difficulties and dangers seem insurmountable, God will provide a way out of them for his children. There are many places in every Christian life which we might well name "*Jehovah-Jireh*," — "the Lord will provide."

"In some way or other the Lord will provide.

It may not be my way,
It may not be thy way,
And yet in his own way,
The Lord will provide."

Understandings and Misunderstandings. What God did shows what he intended to do when he gave the command. "God meant Abraham to make the sacrifice in spirit, not in the outward act." "So far from introducing into Abraham's mind erroneous ideas about sacrifice, this incident finally dispelled from his mind such ideas and permanently fixed in his mind the conviction that the sacrifice God seeks is the devotion of the living soul, not the consumption of a dead body." — *Marcus Dods*.



Head of a Syrian Ram.

He meant to show that the spirit of highest sacrifice can exist without human sacrifices. It was a protest against human sacrifices. It was their condemnation, and the lesson was so thoroughly learned that his descendants have ever since repudiated and abominated such sacrifices (save in a few cases of degeneracy reprimanded and scorned), while Abraham was lifted up into the highest region of self-sacrifice and devotion, and gave his example as a legacy to the world.

This whole transaction has been so perverted both in teaching and in action that it is well to look at it carefully to see just what it means. Many persons will recollect the Pocasset tragedy, where a father killed his little son pretending that he was imitating Abraham. It has been represented that the Bible upheld human sacrifices, and its God was a cruel God, a huge Molech, that delighted in the misery of his creatures. As a matter of fact, the teaching is the exact opposite of this. The Pocasset murderer did not imitate Abraham, but did what he was distinctly forbidden to do. He did not have the *spirit* of Abraham's sacrifice, but did adopt the *form* which was forbidden to Abraham.

Fulfilment of the Promises to Abraham. "The story of the offering of Isaac is marked by a gentle heavenly tenderness . . . while both Abraham and Isaac must have felt toward each other such a love as they never felt before. Before this occurrence his life was holy, and his temper serene and heavenly; but this must have lifted him up to the very gates of heaven." — *Dr. Blaikie.*

"He climbed Love's ladder so high
From the round at the top he stepped to the sky."

After the return home, God gave another vision of the great promises.

"And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said,

By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son :

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore ; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies ;

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

And these promises have ever since been in the process of fulfilment, and are to-day shining brighter than ever before.

II. ABRAHAM'S MESSAGE TO MODERN TIMES. We have just been studying the testing of Abraham and Isaac, with the result of a larger faith that shines down the ages, with rich blessings for all who believe in God and his Son Jesus.

There still comes a somewhat similar experience to many in our day. The trials of life are often a great mystery to the one who suffers the trials. "If God is so rich, why does he let us be so poor? If God is strong and so good, why does he let us have so much pain and sorrow?"

The answer is given in the words he spoke to the Israelites, who wondered why they must wander 40 years in making a journey for which 40 days would have sufficed. "*To prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no*" (Deut. 8 : 2).

Dr. Joseph Parker says, "We also know that God may see reasons for an act, which are hidden from us, so that an act which in a narrow view seems wrong, would appear right to us, nay, divinely heroic, if we knew all the circumstances and reasons. A man rushed up to his boy and cut out of his arm a great piece of flesh. Cruel ! do you say ? No, loving ; for the boy had been bitten by a mad dog. A man went to a neighbor of mine, not a week before the time of this writing, and heating a rod of iron red-hot, burned his friend. Terrible in a Christian land ! do you say ? No, merciful ; for it was a doctor who did it, and the neighbor had a poisoned wound, and would have been dead in two days unless the seemingly cruel act had been performed."

The Principle holds true to-day. There are times and circumstances when we should give up our lives and the lives of our children, in faith and heroism.

For instance : Our boy or girl wishes to be a physician or a nurse, or a worker in the slums. They are exposed to danger in many ways in seeking to make the world better. We give them their opportunity to go forth to all parts of the world as missionaries of the Gospel, among savages and trials and dangers and sickness ; and we give them our benediction if they desire to go. We give them our blessing when

they fight battles against evil men and evil deeds, and numberless wrongs in our own land.

These are like Isaac laid on the altar, — heroes, patriots, whom God makes more useful, more faithful, more blessed, than in any other way.

"I will go where you want me to go,
I will be what you want me to be,
I will do what you want me to do."

III. ONE PHASE OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH THAT WE ALL NEED. Abraham while standing on God's promise that Isaac his son should have descendants as many as the stars, had faith to believe that even if Isaac were sacrificed and burned on the altar, God was able to raise him up from the dead (Heb. 11: 19).

As we look at mankind, there appears one continual procession of the dying, — children, the middle aged, and the old. It is a very sad procession.

But Abraham's faith shows us the way for all who believe in our Heavenly Father.

Jesus dying on the cross had wonderful faith to rest in the assurance that he would rise to life again in three days, when it would seem to be the end of all he came to do on the earth. But it was the real beginning of his great work. And we see him portrayed in his glory in the Revelation.

Listen to Paul. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4: 6-8).

Our little children die, but they have the same change of their physical bodies into spiritual bodies, as described in 1 Cor. 15: 42-44. "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven."

And it is the same change that is made when older ones die. What a blessed hope it is to meet with all the dear ones again!

"I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

Ruskin's Complaint. Ruskin complained in his later life (as told in the preface to *The Place of Dragons*, one of his latest books): "My own feeling now is that everything which has hitherto happened to me, or has been done by me, whether well or ill, has been fitting me to do better work more thoroughly. And just when I seem to be coming out of school . . . and expecting to enter upon some more serious business . . . I am dismissed by the Master I hoped to serve with a 'That's all I want of you, sir.'"

On the contrary, the Christian is only transferred to new and larger duties, among the "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister (to do service, Am. R.), for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1: 14).

Christian's and Hopeful's Welcome. At the funeral of Joseph Cook was read the beautiful description of the death of Christian and Hopeful in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. "Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate, and lo, as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave them to them — the harps to praise withal, and the crown in token of honor. Then I heard in my dream that all the bells of the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, 'Enter ye into the joy of your Lord.' I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, 'Blessing and honor and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.' Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and, behold, the City shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men, with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal. There were also of them that had wings, and they answered one another without intermission, saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.' And after that they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them." — *John Bunyan.*

Transferred. "The resurrection is the transition from a noble achievement to a higher and diviner opportunity. . . . God is not training you for an ever larger and higher service by the vicissitudes and hardships and changes of this life, without

a definite purpose in view. . . . Two soldiers in battle spoke concerning the death of a comrade. One said to the other, 'There's another poor fellow got his discharge.'

" 'Not that,' said the other.

" 'Well, if not that I would like to know what he is.'

" 'Only transferred.'

" 'Transferred? Where?'

" 'To the other department.'

" 'What for?'

" 'For duty.'

" 'What duty?'

" 'Don't know; that depends on what he is fit for.' " — *Rev. W. C. Gordon, Ph. D.*

LESSON IV. — October 27.

ISAAC AND REBEKAH. — Genesis 24.

PRINT Genesis 24:57-67.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Let not kindness and truth forsake thee:
So shalt thou find favor and good understanding
In the sight of God and man.* — PROV. 3:3, 4.

Devotional Reading: John 4:5-14.

Additional Material for Teachers: Gen. 25:19-34; Prov. 31:10-31.

Primary Topic: The Story of Rebekah's Kindness.

Memory Verse: Forget not to show love unto strangers. — Heb. 13:2.

Junior and Intermediate Topic: Rebekah at the Well.

Senior and Adult Topic: Marriage, its Blessings and Responsibilities.

Additional Material: Gen. 2:18-24; Matt. 19:3-12; Eph. 5:22-33.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The purpose of this lesson is to help the families who read it to realize an ideal of what the family should be, every member doing his or her best to live up to the ideal, and help others to live up to it.

"If at first you don't succeed,
Try, try again."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Story of Isaac and Rebekah. The Ideal Family Life.

- I. ISAAC: THE PATRIARCH OF THE COMMONPLACE.
- II. THE STORY OF THE COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE OF ISAAC AND REBEKAH, Gen. 24.
- III. THE IDEAL FAMILY.

The Family as a Whole.
The Husband.
The Wife.
The Children.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, and *Representative Women of the Bible*. Blaikie's *Heroes of the Bible* is

excellent. *Women of the Bible*, "Rebekah," by Lyman Abbott. Geikie's *Old Testament Characters*. *Women of the Old Testament*, "Rebekah," by Horton. *Heroines of the Bible in Art*, Clement. Professor Hodges, of Episcopal Theol. Sem. at Cambridge, has written a series of Bible stories for children.

The Land and the Book, by Dr. Thomson. *Studies in Oriental Social Life*, by H. C. Trumbull.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Gray's *Elegy*, "Full many a gem," etc. Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, vol. 5, "The Hesperid Æglé," § 21, page 344. Dr. J. R. Miller's *Help from Common Days*.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The character of Isaac.
Why did Abraham send way to Haran to obtain a wife for him?
Describe the interview with Rebekah at the well.
What are the qualities that make a good home?
What are the advantages of children in the home?
What can they do to make a good home?
What should be the relation between parents and children?
What is the changed attitude of woman within a few years?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — 1864(?) according to Beecher. Perhaps 20 years after the last lesson.

Place. — Isaac was born at Hebron, 20 miles south of Jerusalem.

Rebekah's home was in Haran, the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia (the region between the Euphrates and the Tigris).

Abraham's home at the time of this lesson was probably at Beersheba, southwest of Hebron, or at Beer-lahai-roi, 50

miles further to the southwest, where Isaac first met Rebekah. It was 500 miles from Haran.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Rebekah, Elmore,* Goodall.

Rebekah and Eliezer at the Well, Doré,* Murillo, Poussin, Thorwaldsen.

Eliezer at the House of Bethuel, Schopin,* Vernet.*

Isaac Meeting Rebekah, Doré,* Raphael.

I. ISAAC, THE PATRIARCH OF THE COMMONPLACE. *His name.* — "Laughter." Probably both Abraham and Sarah

were full of joy at the promise of a son when they were old. Both laughed joyfully with thanksgiving, and their friends joined with them.

It is a blessed thing when children bring laughter instead of tears into the home.

"They are idols of hearts and of households,
They are angels of God in disguise."

But Isaac himself was of a different temperament. "He did not have that exuberance of gladness which is forever rippling with smiles, or bursting forth into peals of laughter. A much quieter and more sombre temperament was his, but his heart knew deep and calm joy": as when Rebekah came he loved her and was comforted.

His birth, according to Professor Blaikie, was at Beersheba, 45 miles southwest of Jerusalem. His father was 100 years old at the time, and his mother was 90.

Characteristics. Isaac reveals human nature in a passive attitude. In passing from Abraham to Isaac we seem to be passing from a mountain torrent to a peaceful pool. He was not a faded reproduction of Abraham, a mere reminiscence of that great man's personality, but the ruggedness and hardness in him were softened and mellowed into harmony and beauty.

"It was the passive more than the active virtues that he was called to exhibit. Isaac was well fitted to impart to others the quiet joy that springs from a kindly, inoffensive heart, eager to give pleasure."

"It has been remarked that the only child of aged parents is usually of a quiet if not sombre disposition, having no playmates of his own age in the family, while his parents are too old to become his playmates themselves." — *From Professor Blaikie.*

Isaac's career was almost devoid of incident. His was "the daily round, the common task." But it was rich in character. We have not, indeed, those active elements of character which nowadays men gather into the word "Energy," and then bow down and worship. We find rather those refined, sensitive, pleasant, passive virtues which make tender and helpful the home relations, and which are the



Hebron.

57. And they said, We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth.

58. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

59. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

60. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou *art* our sister, be thou the *mother* of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

61. And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

grace of all social intercourse: "The best portion of a good man's life, his little nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love."

"It seems very certain that the world is to grow better and richer in the future, not by the magnificent achievements of the highly gifted few, but by the patient faithfulness of the one-talented many." — *Bishop Phillips Brooks*.

The one-talented or two-talented man has a great chance in the world. Being an average man he can sympathize with average men, and his success and usefulness show themselves as possible to the majority. Small talents with will and purpose can accomplish great things.

In the humblest circumstances, in the quietest home life, there are opportunities to cultivate all the virtues that ennoble man.

There is no place or work but "if you look deeper in the dusty soil you will find diamonds — the most sparkling diamonds of Isaac's life." Just as the sun shining on the common fogs and mists transfigures them into glories of color and beauty no artist can imitate, so love and faithfulness, and honesty and courtesy and courage, and all the fruits of the spirit, will transfigure the homeliest, the narrowest, the most commonplace lives with the radiance of heaven.

THE ONE-TALENT MAN

"He couldn't sing and he couldn't play,
He couldn't speak and he couldn't pray.
He'd try to read, but break right down,
Then sadly grieve at smile or frown.
While some with talents ten begun,
He started out with only one.
'With this,' he said, 'I'll do my best,
And trust the Lord to do the rest.'
His trembling hand and tearful eye
Gave forth a world of sympathy,
When all alone with one distressed,
He whispered words that calmed his breast.

"And little children learned to know,
When grieved and troubled, where to go.
He loved the birds, the flowers, the trees,
And loving him, his friends loved these.
His homely features lost each trace
Of homeliness, and in his face
There beamed a kind of tender light
That made surrounding features bright.
When illness came he smiled at fears,
And bade his friends to dry their tears;
He said 'Good-by,' and all confess
He made of life a grand success."

— *John L. Shroy, in Presbyterian Journal.*

II. THE STORY OF ISAAC AND REBEKAH: THEIR COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE, Gen. 24. Abraham was rich and prosperous, the chief or sheik of a clan; and Isaac was the heir of Abraham, his wealth and power. But unless Isaac was married and had children, or at least a child, neither he nor his father could inherit the great and glorious promises God had given him. "Isaac was thirty-seven at his mother's death, and forty when the events of this chapter occurred." The long delay in selecting a wife for Isaac was doubtless for two reasons. One was that apparently Isaac was not a strong, robust youth, and time was desired for him to outgrow his weakness. Another was that as the heir of the promises, it was entirely unfitting that he should marry into a heathen family, and there were no other families of the worshippers of the true God in Palestine at that time. The result of a marriage to a heathen woman would easily have been like that of Esau and his Hittite wives (26 : 34, 35) or Ahab and his fascinating and dominating wife Jezebel who nearly ruined Israel. There might be not a few among the daughters of the Canaanites attractive for their charming manners and their personal beauty, who would have liked to marry the wealthy Isaac. But the difference in religion might have had a most pernicious influence upon Isaac.

Hence Abraham selected the eldest servant of his household, who had charge of all that he had, Eliezer, a wise and godly man, to go to his kindred in Haran, and bade him to choose a wife for Isaac.

62. And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country.

63. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels *were* coming.

64. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

65. For she *had* said unto the servant, What man *is* this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant *had* said, It *is* my master: therefore she took a veil, and covered herself.

66. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

67. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death*.

The Caravan consisted of ten camels with their drivers and caretakers. They would need these for the long journey of 500 miles from Beer-lahai-roi in southern Palestine, where later Rebekah first met Isaac (vs. 62-64). The camels carried rich presents, and gave the impression of the importance of Abraham to those who otherwise could know almost nothing about him. The largeness of the caravan would also be a defence against robbers and bands of wandering Bedouin.

Arrival at Haran. The Sign (vs. 11-14). The cavalcade arrived at Haran and camped by a well in the late afternoon, the time when the young women came to draw water.

Eliezer asked the Lord to give him some sign by which he might know whom to select for Isaac's wife, and make no mistake. He might easily mistake appearances. "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain." While he must choose, he desired that God should guide him to the right choice by some definite sign, "by moving the girl he should address to give him a certain answer. Having arranged this, 'Behold! Rebekah came out with her pitcher upon her shoulder, and the damsel was very fair to look upon.'"



From painting by Goodall
Rebekah.

"They had no difficulty in understanding one another, for both spoke the Semitic tongue." Eliezer asked for a drink of water. She gave it, then offered to give drink to the ten camels, which was no small task. She was so courteous and gracious that Eliezer was captivated, and was sure that she was the ideal wife for Isaac; and he gave her in response, a gold ring, worth \$4.85, and two gold bracelets, weighing ten shekels, worth about \$97. "These were not a bridal gift, but a reward for the service rendered, intended to excite interest in the stranger, and secure the good will of the maiden." — *Int. Crit. Com.*

The camels, servants, and Eliezer were welcomed by Laban to the family home. He told his story. He made known that "the Lord hath

blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses," all of which Isaac would inherit.

Rebekah agreed to go to Isaac, little as she knew of his character, — for all that she did learn was favorable. "And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and

jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah : he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things."

It was no small thing to marry the head of a wealthy clan, with all its advantages.

The returning caravan drew near to Isaac's home at Beer-lahai-roi as Isaac was walking and meditating in the fields. When Rebekah learned that the man she saw was her betrothed husband, she lighted off the camel "as a mark of respect, in accordance with Eastern etiquette," and she covered herself with her veil. "A woman of any position in the East still appears before her betrothed veiled until the ceremony of marriage is completed." — *Driver ; Lane's Modern Egyptians*. The beautiful ending of the story is expressed in the phrases : " And he loved her " : " And Isaac was comforted."

THE IDEAL FAMILY

consists of three divisions bound together with the closest of ties, — stronger, more blessed, more powerful than any other human ties :

The Husband ;
The Wife ;
The Children.

The family is not perfect, not at its best without the children. If the parents have no children, then it is wise to adopt orphan children, and treat them as their own, in order that they may gain the best blessings, and development, and culture, the family can gain from the training of children.

The home should be the centre and source of every good influence, a lamp which can shed its light to those who are nearest, but also reaches around the world. It does great good to the children, broadens them even in their early years to know that they can help and reach those in need even in the distant parts of the world.

There are other things which can best be done by the united family. Family prayers together daily with the children, especially when young. When they are grown up it is not so easy. Going to church together. Each child contributing as well as the parents. Studying the Sunday School lessons together, and all joining in its teaching and services.

And many other things, too many to be written down here ; but they can be suggested by the class.

Note that the bringing up of a family as it should be done is no easy task. The poet sings

"O, could we do with this world of ours
As thou dost with thy garden bowers,
Reject the weeds and keep the flowers, —
What a heaven on earth we'd make it."

But we imperfect people cannot do it. The trying to do it is a training in God's school of life. Many a hard battle must be fought, many a hard task done ; but the battles and the tasks are the upward steps climbing Jacob's ladder, aided by the angels, with God and heaven for our goal.

The Husband. The third chapter of Proverbs, vs. 1-6, 13-17, is an excellent picture of what such a man should be. Eph. 5 : 25, 28 is another picture of him. He must be a true gentleman, as courteous to his wife and to his children as to strangers. Not a few men forget this. He must be an example to his children, and especially to his boys, so that they will admire him, and reverence him, as a college freshman looks up to the senior athlete, admired by all, who can often govern the new-comers better than even the professors.

The "Knights of King Arthur" — each of them takes for himself the name of some ancient or modern knight they admire and try to live up to. The Father should be such an ideal man. — known for his honesty, uprightness, honor, influence, loyalty, wherever he is known at all. And he should be the comrade of his children.

Let the scholars add to the number of these qualities in a discussion in the class.

May it be said of him as it was written of Gen. Charles George Gordon, in the epitaph on his monument in St. Paul's Church in London :

"Who everywhere and at all times gave
His strength to the weak,
His substance to the needy,
His sympathy to the suffering,
And his heart to God."

The Wife. The picture of the ideal woman and wife presented in Proverbs 31 has many points that belong to our day as truly as to 25 centuries ago. Note verses 10, 12, 20, 23, 26, 27, 28-31.

According to the Greek legend, as interpreted by Ruskin, when Jupiter, the type of ruling, manly power, was married to Juno, the goddess of the household, Earth came to the wedding, and brought as a wedding present a branch full of golden apples, which Juno sent to the Garden of the Hesperides, the Greek paradise far over the western sea, in order that the most precious fruit should grow in the loveliest garden of the world. Over these golden apples she placed as guard the four daughters of Atlas. These maidens were named

EGLE, Brightness, a sunny disposition, looking at the bright side of things, filling the home with good cheer.

ERYTHEIA, Blushing, modesty.

HESTIA, The spirit of the home, and all that the home stands for.

ARETHUSA, Ministering, ever ready and glad to help; in sickness, in every kind of need, giving, serving, comforting, reaching all around the world, in unnumbered ways, full of the spirit of love. Making the home as near heaven as can be on earth.

The home is the greatest means of bringing children to Jesus. The religious atmosphere of the home, its climate as it were, the living there in love and the beauty of holiness, training in the Bible and in loving service, family prayers, teaching the children to pray, and all that makes the home a house of God and a gate of heaven, — such a home is the most effective way of bringing the children to Christ, and making them useful to the world. This is the business of parents. The future of their children depends on it.

Have the class add to these as many more of the womanly virtues as their experience and observation have taught them.

The Children. One of the most beautiful and instructive things in the character of Jesus was his love for children. There must have been something very attractive about Jesus in his personality, the beauty of his spirit, the charm of his conversation, the love he bore to all. It is no wonder that they came to him, and after the triumphal entry sang hosannas in his praise.

Every family needs the children, not only for their training, but for the training and blessing of the parents. "For of such is the kingdom of heaven"; and "in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

"O thou child of many prayers!
Life has dangers, life has snares."

Angels in the Kitchen. One of the choicest pictures in the Louvre in Paris is Murillo's Angels in the Kitchen, or The Miracle of San Diego. Murillo "shows us the interior of a convent kitchen; but doing the work there are not mortals in old dresses, but beautiful, white-winged angels. One serenely puts the kettle on the fire to boil, and one is lifting up a pail of water with heavenly grace, and one is at the kitchen dresser reaching up for plates; and I believe there is a little cherub running about and getting in the way, trying to help. . . . All are so busy, and working with such a will, and so refining the work as they do it, that somehow you forget that pans are pans, and pots are pots, and only think of the angels, and how very natural and beautiful kitchen work is, — just what the angels would do, of course."

The Class. It would be impossible to point out the many things children can do in the home, the school, the Christian Endeavor, junior and senior, in the Sunday School, and day school, — Bible reading and Bible study, helping parents, and one another, etc., etc.

Let the class discuss these questions, and the parents read some of the many books that may help them in training children in the way they should go.

The Song-Cure in the Home. A tired mother, says the *Youth's Companion*, worn out with the care of her five children, went away with them on a vacation, and rested by discovering the song-cure.

"It was this way. Every one of the family sings. None of them has a remarkable voice, but they all love music, and it's as much a part of their life as bread and butter.

"Well, when any one of the children does anything that has been forbidden, he is sent to his room to sing till he is ready to say he is sorry. He may choose his own songs, but sing he must.

"One of them, Jimmie, has a quick temper." Mrs. Maxwell laughed at the memory. "Have you ever tried to sing when you were 'mad'?"

"Never!" Mrs. Reid declared fervently.

"Well, try it. You'll find you can't possibly do it and stay angry. Jimmie

couldn't, to save his life. As for me, I grew so interested watching the effects of the song-treatment on those lively youngsters that I got rested before I knew it; and since I've come home, I've found it works exactly as well for other things."

The Church's Care for the Children should stand in the forefront of its work. The older people need its religious services and training because by its inspiring services its members are best prepared to train the young. But in every way possible the church should provide the best for the children, for the Sunday School, young people's meetings, boys' training clubs, and all that can help the children.

LESSON V.—November 3.

APPETITE AND GREED.—Genesis 25:27-34.

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*

—1 COR. 9:25.

Devotional Reading: Rom. 14:13-23.

Additional Material for Teachers: 1 Cor. 8:1-13; 10:23-33; Heb. 12:15-17.

Primary Topic: Learning Self-Control.

Memory Verse: Even a child maketh himself known by his doings.—Prov. 20:11.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

As this lesson is to be given up to the World's Temperance Lesson, the story of the sale of the birthright will be used chiefly as a text and illustration.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time.—According to Beecher, Jacob and Esau were born B.C. 1844. The two brothers were twins; Esau being the older.

Esau sells his birthright to Jacob about B.C. 1827 (Beecher), 1804 (Ussher).

Place.—Beersheba in southern Palestine.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Characteristics of Jacob.

Characteristics of Esau.

What was the birthright?

Why was Jacob the best one to receive it?

What was the character of the sale of the birthright?

What is our birthright?

How does intemperance make us lose it?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Selling Our Divine Birthright.

I. THE TWO BROTHERS, JACOB AND ESAU.

II. ESAU SELLS HIS BIRTHRIGHT TO JACOB.

III. TEMPERANCE APPLICATIONS. HOW PEOPLE SELL THEIR BIRTHRIGHTS.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Commentaries. The works on these early Bible characters.

RECENT TEMPERANCE LITERATURE.
The Scientific Temperance Journal. Excellent. (36 Bromfield St., Boston, Mass. \$1.00 a year.) *Alcohol and the Human Body*, by Horsley and Sturge. (50¢.) *Social Welfare and the Liquor Problem*, by Harry S. Warner. (\$1.10.) *The Anti-Alcohol Movement in Europe*, by Ernest Gordon. (\$1.65.) *Handbook of Modern Facts about Alcohol*, by Cora Frances Stoddard. "A valuable, compact, attractive presentation of the results of the most careful studies of alcohol in its relation to child-life, mental and physical ability, skill, endurance, accidents, disease and general social welfare." *Temperance Bible Studies*, by F. N. Peloubet, full of temperance illustrations for the class. (Nat. Temperance Soc., 58 Reade St., N. Y.)

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan." Bunyan's *Capture of Mansoul*. S. W. Hank's *The Crystal River Turned upon the Black Valley Country*. *Elijah Tone, Citizen*, a capital temperance story by Amos R. Wells. (Christian Endeavor Soc., Boston.)

THE LESSON IN ART.

Esau Selling his Birthright, Ghiberti, Skelz.*

27. And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.

28. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of *his* venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

29. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint.

I. THE TWO BROTHERS: ESAU AND JACOB. The two brothers were twins, but Esau was the elder. They were born and reared at Beersheba. They were as different from one another in character as were Isaac and Rebekah. Esau, in whom Rebekah's nature was emphasized, was the favorite of Isaac, while Jacob, who grafted the shrewdness and business sharpness of his mother's family upon the home-loving and religious and thoughtful nature of his father, was the favorite of Rebekah.

Esau means "hairy," but to this was added the name Edom, "red," both on account of his ruddy color and the red pottage for which he sold his birthright.

"Esau was a sportsman, boisterous, wild, clumsy." Alexander Whyte thus pictures him: "Esau was full of the manliest interests and pursuits. He was a proverb of courage and endurance and success in the chase. . . . He had an eye like an eagle. His ear never slept. His arrow never missed the mark. A prince of men. A prime favorite both with men, women, and children." "A gentleman by birth, but a brute by choice." "He grew to be a worldly, sensuous, adventurous, but withal a brave, goodnatured, and jovial man, ready for any sport or pleasure, no matter at whose cost, and to break, in a jolly, rollicking way, every commandment in the Decalogue." This was the natural result of marrying heathen wives, and becoming associated as a chief with the idolatrous Canaanites.

Jacob means "a supplanter." He lived at home, a plain, domestic man, a large farmer, with business proclivities and skill. He inherited from his mother the genius and insight which enabled him to gain his ends by adroit skill, by diplomacy, by ingenious cleverness, from those who would overcome him by superior physical force. Naturally this talent was cultivated by his living with his robust and physically overbearing brother. He knew by instinct the best end of a bargain. He was a natural-born business man, a splendid talent when joined with conscious integrity. The selling and buying of the birthright when both were young men is an illustration of their characters. He had a great force of character, and a capacity for strong and enduring affection, which is closely allied to a deep religious nature. **Dwelling in tents.** "A man of steady, domestic, moral habits, staying at home, attending to the pasturing of the flocks and the business of the family, instead of wandering abroad in search of pleasure and amusement." — *Students' Commentary*.

The development of both is seen more clearly as they grow older.

"You may grind them both in the self-same mill,
You may bind them heart and brow;
But the poet will follow the rainbow still,
And the other will follow the plow."

II. ESAU SELLS HIS BIRTHRIGHT TO JACOB FOR A MESS OF POTTAGE. The Birthright includes the rights and privileges which, according to patriarchal usages, belonged to the first-born.

1. Succession to the earthly inheritance in Canaan, 28 : 4.
2. The larger portion of the paternal estate, 24 : 36 ; 25 : 5.
3. Lordship over the rest of the family, 27 : 29.
4. The functions of the domestic priesthood, Ex. 4 : 22 ; Num. 8 : 17.
5. Possession of the covenant blessing, transmitted through the paternal benediction.
6. It was the fulfilment of all the promises to Abraham and his descendants, as many as the sand of the seashore, and as the stars of heaven.
7. The birthright as standing for the spiritual blessings of the covenant with Abraham was what Jacob especially desired. — *Chiefly from the Amer. Com. on Genesis*.

Esau one day came in from his hunting tired and hungry and faint, and asked Jacob to give him some of the red pottage which Jacob had been cooking. This pottage was made of lentils, "a species of pulse belonging to the pea tribe," of a yellowish red color, which "are still a favorite dish in Egypt and Syria." — *Delitzsch*.

30. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I *am* faint: therefore was his name called Edom.

31. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

32. And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

33. And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

34. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

Alexander Whyte tells the story thus: "Everybody knew that Esau's birthright was for sale. Isaac knew, Rebekah knew, and Jacob knew, and Jacob had for a long time been eyeing his brother for a fit opportunity." The opportunity came when the ravenous Esau asked for some of his pottage. "As much as you are able to eat, Esau; only, say that you toss me to-day your worthless birthright," said Jacob. "Take it and welcome," said Esau, "and much good may it do you. It has never been worth a haunch of venison to me. You may have it, and my oath on it on the spot, for a good dish at once, and be quick, of your smoking pottage. Take it and let me be done with it."

And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him. He would make it as solemn and binding as possible, for he knew that Esau when his hunger was satisfied would be likely to change his mind. This day. He would have the bargain confirmed on the spot, before Esau had eaten. And he sold his birthright to Jacob. . . . Thus Esau despised his birthright, by selling it at all; by selling it so cheap, for a mess of pottage. "Ye have sold yourselves for naught." So Judas sold his master for thirty pieces of silver.

Fitness for the Birthright. In the first place it had been foretold before their birth (25:23) that the elder should serve the younger. Doubtless Jacob's mother had told her favorite son of this prophecy, and he knew that he was to have the birthright. Then Jacob's natural character better fitted him to be the head of the family and the high priest of their religious life. But still more was he fitted by the tendency of his life and the growth of his character. It was many years before Jacob claimed the birthright.

III. TEMPERANCE APPLICATIONS. SELLING OUR BIRTHRIGHT. Whenever we give up spiritual good for temporary pleasure, or worldly gain, when-



Esau Sells His Birthright.

From an old print.

ever we yield to temptation, whenever we do wrong that we may have wealth or earthly honor, we are selling our birthright for a mess of pottage. Dr. South says, a bad man "sits retailing away heaven and salvation for pence and half pence, and seldom vends any commodity, but he sells his soul with it, like brown paper into the bargain."

Many a man sells his birthright for a mess of pottage, — his character, his conscience, his usefulness, heaven itself, for pride, for worldly gain. He sells his soul for sensuality, for strong drink.

"Beware lest in a moment of weakness, and folly, and sinful forgetfulness of God, you sell your birthright, and barter your happy innocence for torment, and fear, and shame. Beware of false friends. Beware of idle moments. Beware of the beginnings of evil. Beware of loose words. Above all, beware lest you once admit the fatal intrusion of evil thoughts." — *Dean Farrar to the boys of Harrow School.*

"We barter life for pottage; sell true bliss
For wealth or power, for pleasure or renown;
Thus, Esau-like, our Father's blessing miss.
Then wash with fruitless tears our faded crown." — *Keble.*

Let us consider some of the Modern Esaus, and how they sold their Birthright.

In a recent article we are told how some business men in the vicinity of Boston sold their birthright for money, — mean, selfish money. "In the *Missionary Herald* we notice the following:

"In the hold of the four-master schooner, 'The Estelle Krieger,' are 210,000 gallons of New England rum bound for the west coast of Africa, Boston's contribution toward the redemption of the Dark Continent. . . .

"It will work incalculable harm, as it is sure to be 'doctored' and made yet more deadly in its effects. At every port where it is distributed it will be like the letting loose of hell upon the susceptible and unprotected natives."

"We see by *Collier's* that the four-masted schooner 'Orleans' had sailed from Boston for the west coast of Africa with 200,000 gallons of rum. . . . Savages go forth to die each year as a result of this traffic forced on these people by Christian nations."

This last statement is not true. Real Christians never sent that rum; never forced it upon any one. Nor was it sent by the nation, but by selfish Esaus who by so doing sold the divine birthright God had given them.

"The Christian Endeavor Society has for its slogan 'A Saloonless Nation in 1920, and a Saloonless World in 1930.' Can you not call on the churches of all denominations to take this up as their battle cry?"

The Carrie Nation Home Fails! "It is said that there are not enough drunkards' wives in Kansas City, Kan., to keep the home founded by Carrie Nation going, and the property may be given back to her.

"That 'distressing' condition was admitted by Peter W. Goebel, president of the Associated Charities.

"It's no use denying it,' Mr. Goebel said, 'the home is a failure. We can't find any drunkards' wives to live in it. What is to be done about it? Nothing, so far as I can see. If our laws discourage the making of drunkards' wives, there isn't anything we can do. We have done our best, but the odds against us were too great."

There are probably fewer people in Kansas than in any other state who sell their divine birthright to liquor-dealers and saloon-keepers.

Warning the young to keep away from the saloons is not enough. We must extinguish the saloons themselves, and the boys should aid in putting them out after the plan of Hon. Neal Dow of Portland, Maine. He was lecturing one summer evening, and gnats gathered in such swarms around the lamp near him that he took his handkerchief and waved them away. They went for a time, but soon returned. He repeated his movements with his handkerchief, with the same results. Finally, he turned around and blew out the light; and henceforth the insects were no longer attracted, and kept away.

A Warning against Selling the Birthright. "A well-known temperance worker, when asked to address a Sunday School, desired to bring out the fact that the drunkards of the future must come from the ranks of the boys of to-day. 'Boys,' he began, 'these men that we see all around us, on the street, in the stores, in this church, will

grow old and feeble, and sooner or later will die. Who will take their places, and be the men then ?' After a moment's pause they answered, ' We boys.'

" ' Very true,' continued the speaker. ' Now, boys, you have all seen men who drink too much, — drunkards we call them. After a while they will die too. Now, boys, tell me, who do you think will take their places, and be the drunkards then ? ' Promptly came the startling answer, ' We boys.'

" ' We boys ! ' The thoughtless answer roused the whole school. Could there possibly be any truth in it ? Alas ! yes, — not true of all these boys, but of some of them." — *Belle M. Brain*.

Every drunkard was once an innocent child. The whole army of drunkards has been made out of innocent children.

"The drunkards will never be dead;
I will tell you the reason why;
A new one comes to take his place
As fast as the old ones die."

" *I think that this is the best time in the world for the best kind of boys.*"

Strong drink is bringing incalculable evils upon the nation and the world.

No one who begins the course of drinking knows where it will end in his case.

All drunkards began their course in the moderate drinking of lighter intoxicants, and almost always in youth. The only safe way is DON'T BEGIN.

Every older person is responsible for his influence, by word and by example, over the children and youth of to-day.

The definite acts of self-denial, for the sake of the children and of others, furnish a large and fruitful field for the culture of charity and heroism. Charles Kingsley says that " any man or woman in any age, under any circumstances, who *will, can* live the heroic life and exercise heroic influence " ; and especially in giving up rights and privileges for the good of others.

How can you expect your boys, in your home, or in your class, to be more heroic, more self-denying, more victorious over temptation, than you yourself are willing to be ? It is well for the older as well as the younger to consider some facts lately brought together, showing how much of the hope of success of the youth in this life, as well as of preparation for eternal life, depends on their total abstinence from all that can intoxicate.

1. " Employers take more account of the character and habits of the boys whom they employ than they used to do."

2. " There is no question about that, and in the railroad business most of all. A watch is kept on the boy, and if he is found smoking it counts against him ; if he keeps late hours he is at a discount compared with the boy who goes to bed early ; if he drinks or gambles it is fatal to him. The railroad men are the greatest force for temperance in the country, and this is not because they are trying to be social reformers, but from strictly business reasons. For the highest success they need the very best that there is in a man or boy, and these things which I name are things which weaken a boy both physically and mentally.

3. " In Colleges of to-day there is keen competition among those who would get to the head of any class. There is not much hope for students who hold on to encumbrances. And it is an impressive fact that, as Association Men stated last year, ' In Harvard University during the past five decades not one tobacco user has stood at the head of his class, although 83 per cent of all Harvard students use tobacco.' "

4. There has been a great improvement in the morals and general progress of our colleges, and it is largely due to athletics, for they cannot be high in athletics and drink liquor. No liquor is permitted on the college grounds or in the fraternity houses.

5. Nearly all the Presidents of the United States were strongly opposed to the use of intoxicating liquors.

6. Boys and girls, and all members of the Sunday School, should openly take the pledge against the use of intoxicating liquors.

Money versus Men. During the month in which this lesson was completed A Battle Royal was being fought in Boston on the License Question — Yes — or — No.

It was *Money versus Men*. The saloon interest *versus* clean, sober men.

During this battle ex-Governor Eugene N. Foss repeatedly published in the daily papers certain proposals, for whose success, if tried, he was willing to put up a bond of one million dollars. One such broadside was the following :

A Challenge To Every Boston Voter!

The Defense of the saloon in Boston makes me tired and I make the following Proposition to the Voters of Boston:

I will agree to see the city of Boston harmless so far as direct loss of revenue from Liquor Licenses, water rents and all other revenues connected with the saloons of Boston, *provided* the city of Boston will enter into a contract with me for a term of five years to give me one-half of any savings the city may make, directly or indirectly, on account of the city going No-License. This matter is to be referred to a Commission of three; the Mayor of Boston to appoint one, I to

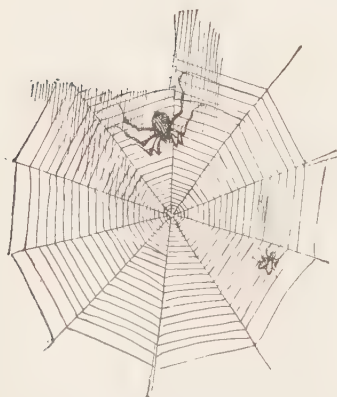
appoint one; those two to choose the third member.

In reference to people thrown out of work, like bartenders, etc., because of the closing of the saloons in Boston, I will agree to secure positions for them.

As to Real Estate to be vacated by reason of a No-License vote, the experience of cities like Seattle and Denver is, that such Real Estate has been entirely taken up by legitimate business within three months of a No-License law becoming operative.

I Will Put up a Bond of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) to Protect the City in This Agreement

VOTERS! If You Mean Business You Will Vote NO on Tuesday



"Will you walk into my parlor?"

Said the spider to the fly;

"Tis the prettiest little parlor

That ever you did spy."

* * * * *

"Poor Master Fly, so young and small,

Why did you go to Spider Hall?

* * * * *

"A band of crickets and gnats he had hired,

Who played loud vales and never tired;

He had laid the floor all velvety fine

With Persian lilac of scent divine.

"Your boon companions were strangely dumb,

Never a flutter, nor buzz, nor hum;

He had sucked them dry as a spider is able,

And set them upright around the table.

"The drug worked well and the luck went wry,

At last you struck him and gave him the lie. . . .

There's a gruesome cellar beneath that floor,

And the shriveled victims come out no more.

* * * * *

"But, poor Master Fly, so young, so small,

Why did you go to Spider Hall?" — *Boston Journal*.

"But there are a great many people more stupid than that fly. Passing along the street of a certain western city, one may read in large glowing letters the sign, '*Cob-web Saloon*.' A very appropriate name surely — it tells the whole story. Look at a fly in a spider's web, and then tell me if it is not a pretty good representation of one caught in the drink web." — *Blackboard and Crayon*.

LESSON VI. — November 10.

JACOB DECEIVES HIS FATHER. — Genesis 27 : 18-29.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Speak ye truth each one with his neighbor. — EPH. 4 : 25.

Devotional Reading : Eph. 4 : 25-32.

Additional Material for Teachers : Gen. 27 : 1-45 ; Prov. 12 : 17-20.

Senior and Adult Topic : The Fruits of Falsehood.

Additional Material : Gen. 3 : 1-24 ; John 8 : 44 ; Gen. 4 : 9-15 ; 37 : 31-35 ; Col. 3 : 9 ; Rev. 22 : 15. See also Additional Material for Teachers.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

In a striking sermon Rev. William R. Richards, D.D., pictures the modern Esau and Jacob going to college. Esau is a popular fellow, picked out at once for an athletic team—only he won't train faithfully. He flings money around lavishly, though his landlady has to wait a year for her bill, and Father Isaac has to put another mortgage on the homestead. He cuts a great figure, Freshman year. Sophomore year, you do not hear so much about him. Junior year, he has dropped out of college and no one knows what he is doing. Clerk in a store, it is rumored; or he may be dead. So Esau despised his college birthright.

"But poor little Jacob—how the big brother used to laugh at him for his petty, grinding ways! He could scarcely speak to a dozen people without blushing and stammering, or walk without stumbling, or learn a lesson without digging at it all the morning.

"Jacob once entered the English House of Commons, and essayed his maiden speech; but he spoke so awkwardly that the whole House was overcome, and fairly laughed him down; but not till he had said through his set teeth, 'I will make you listen to me before I am through.' And he kept his word; he was a lineal descendant of the old Jacob, and bore his name, Disraeli, till he changed it for that of Beaconsfield, Prime Minister of England."

Jacob, in the Bible story, had many things to learn before he could become fitted to inherit the birthright of the people of God, and his blessed promises.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time.—Professor Beecher gives tentatively B.C. 1784 as the date of this lesson, about 43 years after Esau's selling his birthright to Jacob. The dates are uncertain.

Place.—Isaac and his family were living at Beersheba, about 45 miles S.W. of Jerusalem.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The characters of the lesson are depicted in Whyte's *Bible Characters*; Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*; *Isaac, Jacob and Moses*, by Marcus Dods; *Isaac and Jacob*, by Rawlinson ("Men of the Bible" Series); *Bible Miniatures*, by Amos R. Wells; *Geikie's Old Testament Characters*; *The Hebrew Twins*, by Samuel Cox; *The Bartered Birthright*, by Rev. F. A. D. Launt, D.D. *Bible Partings*, by E. J. Hasell. Fine sermons in *God's Choice of Men*, by Rev. William R. Richards. Robertson's *Sermons*, vol. v.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Review the characteristics of Jacob and Esau. Which was the one best fitted to possess the birthright? Or which was best fitted to become its possessor? What imperfections was it necessary to overcome? What deceit and falsehood did Jacob use to gain it? Is it ever right to deceive or tell a lie? What does the Bible say about lying?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Evils of Deceit; the Need and Value of Truth.

- I. THE TWO BROTHERS GROWN UP.
- II. ISAAC PLANS TO GIVE THE BIRTHRIGHT TO ESAU, 27 : 2-5.
- III. REBEKAH'S SCHEME TO GIVE THE BIRTHRIGHT TO JACOB, 27 : 5-29.
- IV. ESAU COMES IN AND CLAIMS THE BLESSING, 27 : 30-45.
- V. APPLICATIONS TO MODERN TIMES.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

"Esau Selling His Birthright," in Keble's *Christian Year*. "Isaac's Blessing on Jacob," by Wesley. "Rebekah Parting with Jacob," by Emily Taylor. "Esau" in Quarles' *Divine Fancies*.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Isaac Blessing Jacob, Doré,* Raphael, Horst.*
Esau Claiming the Blessing, Raphael, Rembrandt.

I. THE TWO BROTHERS GROWN UP. More than forty years have passed since Esau sold his birthright to Jacob. Esau may have forgotten it, but Jacob, never. The family, Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob, were living at Beersheba in southern Palestine. "The smooth course of Isaac's life is not interrupted in connection with the history of his sons."

Esau, "lordly, selfish and stirring, — yet not without warmth of heart, could not brook the irksome labor of the farm ; the pleasures and excitement of the chase were what he delighted in ; and the richer and more luxurious food that a cunning hunter could procure." — *Professor Blaikie*.

But Note there were possibilities of great good in Esau, if he had been willing to make the most of his opportunities. He could not become like Abraham or Isaac or Jacob, but he could have been a noble, useful Esau ; an attractive man, using all his strength to defend virtue and innocence ; his courage, energy, and skill to war against all evils, and to defend his home from enemies ; his healthy open-heartedness and good nature to attract men to the true religion and pure morality. What a character he might have ripened into !

Jacob was the very opposite. He was in his element among the flocks and herds ; could give his heart to the work of the place. "If his mother loved him better, it was because he had a more domestic disposition. But what nature seemed to have denied him, vigilance and cunning and sharp practice enabled him to attain." — *Professor Blaikie*.

Illustration. God sees the possible blessings in our natures, and seeks to make these possibilities realities. It is like the vision of the sculptor who sees the possible statue in the marble, as Michelangelo once said of a piece of beautiful marble, outwardly defiled and thrown one side, "I see an angel there, and must get him out."

"I stood on the shore beside the sea ;
The wind from the west blew fresh and free,
While past the rocks at the harbor's mouth
The ships went north and the ships went south,
And some sailed out on an unknown quest,
And some sailed in to the harbor's rest ;
Yet ever the wind blew out of the west.

"O, set your sail to the heavenly gale,
And then, no matter what winds prevail,
No reef shall wreck you, no calm delay ;
No mist shall hinder, no storm shall stay ;
Though far you wander and long you roam
Through salt sea-spray and o'er white sea-foam,
No wind that can blow but shall speed you home."
— *Annie Johnson Flint*.

II. ISAAC PLANS TO GIVE THE BIRTHRIGHT TO ESAU. 27 : 2-5. Isaac was growing old and his eyes were dim. Hence he summoned Esau his oldest son to receive the blessing of the birthright.

It is not at all probable that he knew anything about Esau's sale of the birthright to Jacob ; nor the divine promise that "the elder should serve the younger." It is quite probable that Esau also had forgotten the transaction with Jacob, or at any rate he had no intention of carrying it out. In addition to this he "had eaten and drunken and danced with the Hittite inhabitants of the land. He had sacrificed and sworn and vowed to their false gods of the fields and of the streams and of the unclean groves — till at last, in open defiance of all decency and religion, he brought home two Canaanite wives to his father's covenanted camp." — *Alexander Whyte*.

Therefore he was utterly unfitted to be the head for all time of the nation with the glorious spiritual and temporal promises God had made to Abraham.

But Isaac, feeling the infirmities of age, though he lived many years after this, wished to devolve the care of his family upon his eldest son, and proposed at a feast to bestow upon him the birthright blessing, which would have made Esau the head of the family. He requested Esau to go forth and hunt for venison, and bring it to him, and make for him a savory meat, and at the feast Isaac would give the Birthright Blessing.

Several writers speak of the aged Isaac's "evident gluttony" as desiring "most of all a good dish of delicious venison," the sensual pleasure of eating a highly seasoned meal. And they call it "a singular fact that Isaac should be so fond of good eating as to deem it suitable to send out his son for venison before imparting to him a great spiritual as well as temporal privilege."

But it seems to me that this is a misinterpretation of Isaac's plan. It was customary and natural, then as now, to hold a great feast on such an occasion, even if Isaac were able to eat very little of the venison. It was the occasion and not the hunger of the aged father that drew not only himself, but a company of those interested, doubtless a large number, to such a rare and bountiful banquet, like a marriage feast, or the coming of age festival among English landowners.

III. REBEKAH'S SCHEME TO GIVE JACOB THE BIRTHRIGHT, 27 : 5-20. Rebekah had overheard Isaac's plan to give Esau the Birthright, as soon as he could succeed in his hunting for venison. She immediately arranged to outwit Isaac and Esau while he was out hunting, and gain the Birthright for Jacob.

Jacob had a right to it, for he had bought it of Esau.

Jacob was best fitted for it.

18. And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I; who *art* thou, my son?

19. And Jacob said unto his father, I *am* Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

20. And Isaac said unto his son, How *is it* that thou hast found *it* so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought *it* to me.

21. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou *be* my very son Esau or not.

22. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau.

23. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him.

24. And he said, *Art* thou my very son Esau? And he said, I *am*.

25. And he said, Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought *it* near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank.

Two kids of the goats made the savory feast for the great occasion.

The skins of the kids were put on his hands and his neck to imitate the rough and hairy skin of Esau, if Isaac should feel of him. "The Oriental camel-goat is meant, large flocks of which are still to be found near Mt. Lebanon. They have long, silky hair, which looks and feels not unlike human hair." — *American Com.*

Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son and put it upon Jacob. "It was probably the long white robe, — the vestment of the first-born, which, transmitted from father to son, was kept in a chest among fragrant herbs (v. 27), and was worn on all festive occasions." — *Amer. Com.* So when Jacob drew near his father and kissed him, he smelled the smell of his raiment, and believed it to be Esau.

The Deception and the Birthright Feast, were all ready for Isaac's part before Esau had returned from his hunting.

Jacob came unto his father and said: My father!

Isaac: Here *am* I; who *art* thou, my son?

Jacob: I *am* Esau thy first-born. I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

Isaac: How *is it* that thou hast found *it* so quickly?

Jacob: Because the Lord thy God brought *it* to me.

Isaac: Come near, that I may feel thee, whether thou *be* my very son Esau or not.

Jacob went near unto Isaac, and he felt him.

Isaac: The voice *is* Jacob's voice; but the hands *are* the hands of Esau. *Art* thou my very son Esau?

Jacob: I *am*.

Isaac then partook of the feast, which he supposed was venison, after which he said to Jacob, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.



The Blessing of Jacob.

Doré.

26. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

27. And he came near, and kissed him : and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed :

28. Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine :

29. Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee : be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee : cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Jacob came near and kissed him.

Isaac smelled the smell of his raiment . . . as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed.

Then followed the Birthright Blessing conferred on Jacob, as recorded in verses 28, 29. These gave the temporal blessings of the birthright ; but in 28 : 1-4 the richer blessings were added when Jacob left his home for Padan-aram.

IV. **ESAU COMES IN AND CLAIMS THE BLESSING.** just as Jacob goes out from the presence of his father. Both Isaac and Esau are astonished and surprised. It was too late, and **Esau lifted up his voice and wept.** " The wild, impulsive, sensuous hunter, crying like some trapped creature." Whatever Jacob had done, Esau had long before this sold his birthright ; and his life and character made him unfit for the Birthright Blessing.

But Isaac gave him a kind of blessing adapted to his character. And Esau left his venison, and went out in anger planning to slay Jacob as soon as his father died.

The lives of the two brothers are well summed up by Stanley in *The Jewish Church* : " In Jacob and Esau the good and evil are so mingled that at first we might be at a loss which to follow, which to condemn. But yet, taking the two from first to last, how entirely is the judgment of Scripture and of posterity confirmed by the result of the whole ! The mere impulsive hunter vanishes away light as air. The substance, the strength of the chosen family, the true inheritance of the promise of Abraham, was interwoven with the very essence of the character of the ' plain man, dwelling in tents,' steady, persevering, moving onward with deliberate, settled purpose, through years of suffering and of prosperity, of exile and return, of bereavement and recovery. On the one hand, fickleness, unsteadiness, weakness, want of faith, and want of principle ruin and render useless the noble qualities of the first ; and, on the other hand, steadfast purpose, resolute sacrifice of present to future, fixed principle purify, elevate, turn to lasting good even the baser qualities of the second."

V. **APPLICATIONS OF THIS STORY TO MODERN TIMES.** 1. We must judge of the guilt of this transaction by Jacob and his mother not by our light, but by theirs. For deceit was not looked upon then as a great evil, especially with a good motive and in a good cause.

2. We note how many times Jacob lied to his father on this occasion. (1) "*I am Esau thy first-born son.*"

(2) "*Eat of my venison,*" when it was goat's flesh.

(3) "*How did you find it so soon ?*" "*The Lord thy God brought it to me.*" An almost blasphemous utterance.

(4) "*I am thy very son Esau.*"

(5) Isaac felt of Jacob ; "*The voice is Jacob's, the hands Esau's.*"

(6) The whole plan was a deceit and an acted lie forced upon Jacob by his mother. *How about modern lying?*

3. *The conditions* under which these false statements were made.

(1) It was plain that Jacob had bought the birthright of Esau.

(2) It was also plain that Jacob, with all his faults, was better fitted than Esau to hold the birthright, or rather he had within him the possibilities which could be best trained into fitness.

(3) It is also plain that God in His providence designed Jacob to possess it.

(4) Could Rebekah and Jacob, when Isaac's sudden and unexpected move to give the Birthright to Esau accidentally came to their notice, — could they be sure that it was not God's plan ? and if they neglected the opportunity a wrong might be done ?

How about modern business transactions ?

4. *It is always a sin to gain right things in a wicked way.* Lying and deceit are always and eternally wrong. God in no sense approved of the way in which Jacob obtained the birthright. It seemed to Rebekah and Jacob as if God's promises were about to fail, and they must do something to bring the right thing to pass, even if they did a wrong to accomplish it. But did God need Jacob's sin in order to carry out His plans ? God forbid ! The work would have been done far better if Jacob had gained his birthright in God's way and in God's time.

How much blame do you lay on Jacob ?

How much blame do you lay on his mother ?

What did this sin of lying and deceit cost them ?

"I talked with you to-day, all three —
Two of you lurked unseen —
Yourself, the boy you used to be,
And the man you might have been.

"You never knew that silently
They smiled at you unseen,
The ardent boy you used to be,
And the man you might have been."

5. *Lying and Liars.* There are some very severe statements in the Bible about lying and liars that need our attention.

Satan. "There is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own : for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8 : 44).

In picturing the completion of the kingdom of heaven in the Book of Revelation we are told, that "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (Rev. 21 : 27 ; 22 : 15) cannot enter the kingdom of heaven" on earth or in the future world. Lying is absolutely contrary to all the laws and principles of God's kingdom.

Now what about Jacob's lies to his father ?

What about the many people in various kinds of business, who give short weights and measures, who deceive in their business, who misinterpret in many ways ? Are all these shut out ? Are all boys and girls who have told a lie, or lies, shut out ? These are wrong. They form a dangerous habit. They ought to be repented of from the depth of the soul. Otherwise they will lead one to become a liar by habit, as a part of one's nature and character, permeated through and through with deceit.

Jacob, soon after his experience, repented, and became what we now would call a Christian.

"In Jacob, we have a struggle against baser elements of character, gradually resulting in the triumph of the nobler." — *Dods.*

"Think gently of the erring one!
And let us not forget,
However darkly stained by sin,
He is our brother yet.

"Heir of the same inheritance,
Child of the self-same God ;
He hath but stumbled in the path
We have in weakness trod."

"Had thine given place but to thy Father's will
'Thou 'adst thy Birthright ; and thy blessing still." — *Francis Quarles.*

General John H. Littlefield, who studied law under Abraham Lincoln, tells how, on hearing a would-be client's statement, if he decided that the man was in the wrong, Lincoln would say, "You'll have to get some other fellow to win this case for you. I couldn't do it. All the time, while standing there talking to that jury, I'd be thinking, 'Lincoln, you're a liar' ; and I believe I should forget myself and say it out loud."

Many years ago Mr. Durant, the builder of Wellesley College, preached in the church of which I was pastor the most powerful sermon I ever heard. The richest man in the parish was strongly impressed, and we went together to his house. He became a Christian then and there.

He was the owner of a large braid mill. The braid was measured by winding it around a large drum which was supposed to be five yards in circumference, as stated on each piece. But one quarter of a yard short netted him \$25,000 a year. Each piece was a lie.

The next morning I went to the factory, and the first word I heard was that Mr. Blank had ordered the drum to be enlarged so to make each piece of full length. He is truly converted, the workmen said.

Washington and the cherry tree which as a boy he had cut with his hatchet, and when charged with it, said, "I cannot tell a lie, I did it," — is known to almost every child in the United States. And lately it has been shown that the story is probably true.

Absolute truth in word and deed is the essential element in our progress to the kingdom of heaven on earth.

What would have been the result if Jacob had told the truth to his father when asked, "Art thou my very son Esau or not?" and he had replied, "I am not Esau, I am Jacob," and then had told the whole story in a quiet conference with his father?

There is only one safe way for any one, but especially for the young, when he has done wrong : it is to face the truth boldly to those who have a right to know. Absolute truth in all dealings. The young trained to tell the truth, and to hate lying, always, at any cost.

LESSON VII. — November 17.

JACOB FLEEING FROM HIS ANGRY BROTHER.

— Genesis 28 : 10-22.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He hath not dealt with us after our sins,
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.* — Ps. 103 : 10.

Additional Material for Teachers : Gen. 27 : 46-28 : 9.

Primary and Junior Topic : Jacob's Vision.

Memory Verse : Surely Jehovah is in this place ; and I knew it not. — Gen. 28 : 16.

Senior and Adult Topic : God Following His Wandering Children.

Additional Material : Ex. 2 : 11-3 : 10 ; Jonah 1 : 1-17 ; Ps. 139.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"One of the best ways for a superintendent to increase the efficiency of the school over which he presides is to persuade his teachers to visit other schools.

"Teachers are in danger of getting into ruts, and of thinking there is no other way of doing things than the way they do them. It will give the average teacher a divine discontent to see the work of an efficient teacher in his own department in a school away from home.

"Make use of the great law of imitation which business men are making such large use of to-day in training their salesmen and other employees.

"One day a 'star' salesman who had developed a plan for increasing the company's sales challenged his employer to act as a customer. So earnestly and skilfully did he set forth the desirability of his goods that he actually sold them to the owner." — *Lewis Keast in the Sunday School Journal.*

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Immediately after the last lesson. Professor Beecher gives as the tentative date, B.C. 1784.

Place. — The vision or dream of Jacob, at Bethel, 12 miles north of Jerusalem, and nearly 60 miles from Beersheba.

The whole distance from Beersheba to Padan-aram must have been about

500 miles. The old home was in the city of Haran, in Padan-aram, near the Euphrates in northern Mesopotamia.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why did Jacob have to leave his home?
In what ways did this going away from home work for Jacob's good?
Trace his journey on the map.
What was the purpose of his vision?
Was this vision the means of his conversion?
What was the teaching of this vision to us?
Do angels ever come to us from heaven?
Was Jacob's vow to give to God one-tenth of all he gained a bargain with God or a thank-offering of love?
Is it the duty of all to give one-tenth of all their gains?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Conversion of Jacob to a New Life. By a Dream-Vision.

- I. JACOB'S FLIGHT FROM HOME.
- II. JACOB'S MEDITATIONS ON THE WAY.
- III. JACOB'S VISION OF THE STAIRWAY FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN, vs. 10-13.
- IV. JACOB'S VISION A TYPE OF JESUS CHRIST.
- V. GOD'S PROMISES TO JACOB, vs. 13-15.
- VI. JACOB FEELS THE SOLEMNITY OF THE VISION, vs. 16, 17.
- VII. THE CONVERSION OF JACOB, vs. 18-22.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Ladder of God, by Rev. Kenneth S. Guthrie, Ph.D. *Eventful Nights in Bible History*, by Bishop Alfred Lee. *The Hebrew Twins*, by Samuel Cox, D.D. Robinson's *Bethel and Pennel*. Books on Jacob cited in the last lesson. *Famous Men of the Old Testament*, by M. B. Wharton, D.D. Whatley's *Good and Evil Angels*.

Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine" and "Sandalphon"; Bonar's "Bethel Dream-Land"; Lucy Larcom's "The Ladder of Angels"; Whittier's "My Thanks," "The Holy Land," "The Vision of Echard"; Tennyson's "Early Spring"; Tilton's "The Two Ladders"; "On Jacob's Pillow," by Quarles; such hymns as "Nearer my God to Thee" and "O God of Bethel."

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Numerous references to this event are made by the poets, among them being

THE LESSON IN ART.

Jacob's Dream, by Doré,* Murillo,* Raphael, Rubens.

I. JACOB'S FLIGHT FROM HOME. Esau naturally was very angry, on account of his loss and the deception practised upon him. Rebekah and Jacob, conscious of wrong, were afraid that the lawless Esau might murder his brother. Indeed, he planned to slay Jacob as soon as his aged father died, which event he thought to be not far distant. Then Rebekah would be a lonely widow without much comfort in her desolated home.

Nevertheless there was nothing else to do but to send Jacob quietly away to her brother Laban at Haran on the pretext of obtaining a wife from among his own kindred. She appealed to her husband, who agreed that this was the only safe plan. Isaac gave Jacob his choicest blessing, and sent him to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

II. JACOB'S MEDITATIONS ON THE WAY. Without a servant to attend him, or a beast to carry him, or any other accommodation, except, as he afterward informs us (Gen. 32:10), "a staff" to walk with, he pursues his solitary way. Jacob may have stolen away secretly, in Esau's absence, and without any retinue, and have shunned the frequented path to Padan-aram, in order to elude the vigilance and resentment of his brother. But he had many things to think of on his lonely way. Had he done right in yielding to his mother who insisted on her plan? Could he not have conferred with his father, and talked with Esau, and settled the question without deceit or lying? Could he not have said:

"If only myself could talk to myself
As I knew him a year ago,
I could tell him a lot
That would help him a lot,
Of things that he ought to know."

But now he had broken up the home. He was a lone man, "an outcast, a fugitive from justice, a banished man, who felt he had spoiled his life," walking a long distance amid dangers and temptations, "fearing each bush and Esau as he went through desolate regions." God seems far away. Every one is in trouble. How can I find forgiveness?

Thus Jacob was moving slowly along on his way, while God was silently preparing him for a new and better life.

"I wish there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes, and all our heart aches
And all our poor selfish grief
Could be dropped like a shabby old coat, at the door,
And never put on again." — Louise Tarkington.

III. JACOB'S DREAM VISION OF THE GOLDEN STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN AND GOD, 28:10-13. Toward night, as the sun had set and the darkness was closing around him, Jacob had reached the outskirts of Bethel at the place where Abraham had erected an altar to God, the first one in Palestine. And he took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillows. He took one stone only (see v. 18).



Staff.

10. And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba and went toward Haran.

11. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

"This would be the second or third evening of his flight." — *Dods*. The "stones of that place" are still numerous enough to accommodate an army of Jacobs. It was no hardship for Jacob to take a stone for a pillow; the Syrians and Palestinians do it every night. Sleeping on the ground in the open air, where there is not even a bush for shelter, is the commonest thing in the world.

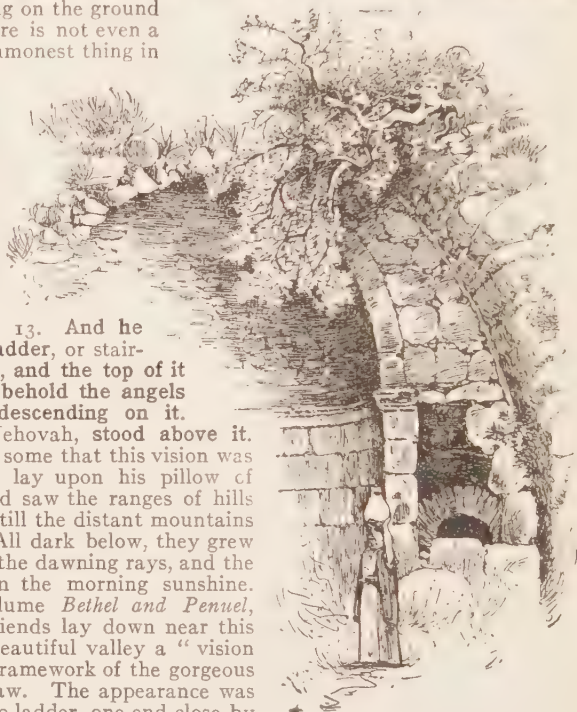
Some chapters beyond the one where this incident is recorded is a single verse (35: 3) which throws no little light upon this night of the vision. It shows that Jacob had been praying to God in his time of need, and that the vision was an answer to his prayer.

The Dream-Vision, 12, 13. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder, or stairway, set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord, Jehovah, stood above it.

It has been thought by some that this vision was suggested to Jacob as he lay upon his pillow of stones in the twilight, and saw the ranges of hills rising one above another, till the distant mountains seemed to join the sky. All dark below, they grew brighter as they rose into the dawning rays, and the farthest peaks gleamed in the morning sunshine. Dr. Robinson, in his volume *Bethel and Peniel*, says that he and some friends lay down near this spot and saw down the beautiful valley a "vision that must have been the framework of the gorgeous spectacle the patriarch saw. The appearance was precisely that of a gigantic ladder, one end close by us, distinct at our feet, the other almost touching the sky. We laid our heads back upon the pillows, and in an instant the illusion was perfect."

Note (1). The base of the ladder was upon the earth. Every right life has one end based upon the earth. Our bodies must be cared for. We must eat, work, do business. That is a false idea that would separate true life from the earth and hide it from worldly care and work and pleasure. God's saints are found in the marts of business, amid the hum of machinery, in the activities of life, far more than in hermits' huts or convent walls. But that earthly life is a failure unless it is permeated with the spirit and principles of heaven.

(2) *And the top reached to heaven.* Every step is a step toward heaven and God. "Shall your ladder, standing on the earth, reach to heaven? or is your ladder in its whole length flat along the ground? I mean your plans in life. Do they really go up, and consciously take hold of the future and the spiritual? Woe be to him who lays out a plan which has nothing in it but this world! Your ladder must be long enough to reach and rest its top in heaven." — *H. W. Beecher*.



Ruins of a Church at Beitin.

Said to have been erected as a Memorial to Jacob's dream at Bethel.

That is the completion of your life. That is where you are to go, if you are in the right way.

(3) *The angels of God ascending and descending.* "God would teach him the connecting and living intercourse between heaven and earth. The angels descending from heaven to earth designate the revelations, the words, and promises of God; the ascending angels indicate faith, sighs, confession and prayer." — *Lange*. It was a visible symbol to Jacob that communication was open between earth and heaven; that his prayers had gone up to God; and answers, promises, strength, comfort, protection, were coming down from God to him. "Jacob had thought himself alone; the vision peoples the wilderness. He had felt himself defenceless; the vision musters armies for his safety. He had been groveling on earth, with no thoughts beyond its fleeting goods; the vision lifts his eyes from the low level on which he had been gazing. He had been conscious of but little connection with heaven; the vision shows him a path from his very side right into its depths." — *Maclaren*.

"Around your lifetime golden ladders rise;
And up and down the skies,
With winged sandals shod,
The angels come and go, the messengers of God."

(4) *And, behold, the Lord stood above it.* Or, as in the margin of the Amer. R., "stood beside him," near, as a friend. Jacob was homeless, and needed the vision of the stairway to his heavenly home. He was poor and unprotected, and needed the vision of the ministering, succoring angels. But especially he was lonely, sad, penitent, heart-hungry, and needed a Father.

(5) *It is a ladder all the way.* The rising is step by step. "No one rises to sainthood at a bound. No one gets the victory once for all over his sins and faults. It is a struggle of long years; and every day must have its own victories, if we are ever to be crowned. It may give some people considerable comfort to think of life's course as a ladder, which one must climb slowly, step by step. . . . Here is the key to all growth of character. We must rise by daily self-conquests. We must make stepping-stones of our dead selves. Every fault we overcome lifts us a little higher. Every low desire, every bad habit, all longings for ignoble things, that we trample down, become ladder rounds on which we climb upward out of groveling and sinfulness into nobler being." — *Rev. John R. Miller*. It is true "that men may rise on the stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things." It is still more true that they can rise on their *living* selves, on every duty well done, on faith gained and love enlarged, on battles won.

"We rise by things that are under feet;
By what we have done of good and gain;
By the pride deposed and the passion slain;
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet." — *Holland*.

Rubens' Great Picture. "Those who have seen Rubens' great picture of Jacob's ladder-vision will never forget the ideal beauty of the young patriarch's face. The painting is a blaze of glorious light. The stone pillow shines like a lamp of gold in the radiance. The ladder and the angels are marvels in design and execution. But in the rapture in the sleeper's face the genius of the painter has its chief expression. Think, then, of the look on Jacob's face when he awoke." — *Launt*.

Take Note why this Message from God came to Jacob in the form of a dream-vision. The purpose was in order to make the deepest and most lasting impression on Jacob's mind. It was a real vision; a vivid picture of God's words; of eternal truth, reaching down the ages for thirty-five centuries.

IV. THE VISION SENT TO JACOB IS A TYPE OF CHRIST. God the Everlasting Father is eternally in heaven. Jesus Christ the Son of God came down from heaven to man.

He was both God and man, human and divine; and hence He was the connecting link between God and man, heaven and earth.

When Christ said, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (John 1: 51), he took up the full explanation of Jacob's vision, and for the first time showed what that stairway is that serves as a medium of communication between God and man.

Consider how many times the angels, God's messengers, are referred to in the Bible.

All the way there are communications between the heart and God — prayers and thoughts ascending, answers and influences and helps descending. The Holy Spirit,

13. And, behold! the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth: and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15. And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.

16. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not.

17. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven.

the love of God, light and truth and guidance, are ever coming to us in heavenly measures. Thus indeed shall the whole of life be a "stepping heavenward."

"An endless chain of angels ceaselessly coming down full of blessing, and going up empty of all but desires, requests, aspirations." — *Dods*.

Christ is the means of communication between heaven and earth. Through him came God's love, the revelation of God's character, the influences of the Holy Spirit, the knowledge of divine truths, the reality of immortal life, the assurance of forgiveness. Through him we have access to God, our prayers and praises rise, our love grows strong, we have ideals and aspirations, we become in character and life nearer to God, we are made the children and heirs of God. Every upward step in life is through Christ as the way.

V. **GOD'S PROMISES TO JACOB**, vs. 13-15. God promises to give Jacob the land of Palestine which he will inherit from Abraham and Isaac, and which his descendants shall hold for all time.

His descendants shall be in number as the sands and the stars. And they shall bless all the families of the earth (through Jesus the Christ).

And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of (Am. R.).

The Jews are the fulfilment of this promise, repeated again and again. For nearly 4000 years since Abraham, they have existed as a race. Palestine is yet free for them to come to it. The way the Jews have been kept by God's promise is one of the most marvellous facts in all history.

God's Promises to Us. There is a charming little booklet called *Expectation Corner*, an allegory on prayer almost as good as *Pilgrim's Progress*. A poor man in Redeemed Land mourned over his poverty, and was taken at length to see his Lord's treasure houses. There he found a room called the MISSED BLESSINGS OFFICE, full of blessings marked for him which his weak faith would not expect, so that his door was closed when they were brought. He saw another storehouse called the DELAYED BLESSINGS OFFICE, full of good things for which the receivers were not prepared, or which were not fully ripened for their use. They were growing, and would be sent in fulness of time.

Trench's *Poems*, "The Suppliant," where it is shown that in the prayer itself is a part of the answer. In each "Come Lord" lies a "Here am I."

"Thy very prayer to thee was given,
Itself a messenger from heaven."

God has given us many great and helpful promises.

Make a list of many of them.

VI. **JACOB FEELS THE SOLEMNITY OF THE VISION**, vs. 16, 17. When Jacob awoke, with the vision still in his mind, he said, Surely the Lord, Jehovah, is in this place, and I knew it not. He was astonished that God should appear to a sinful, though penitent man, with such promises and blessings.

17. And he was afraid, in the very presence of the Almighty. He was filled with awe and astonishment, a feeling of his own weakness and imperfections. How dreadful, awe-inspiring, is this place. This is none other but the house of God, and

18. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and set it up *for* a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19. And he called the name of that place Beth-el; but the name of that city was *called* Luz at the first.

20. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21. So that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the LORD be my God.

22. And this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

this is the gate of heaven. "In whatever place the soul of man feels the presence and power of God, there is the house of God." — *Trapp*. And this is the gate of heaven. "Alluding to the ladder or stairway opening to him access to the heavenly world. If it was a ladder for angels to traverse, it was also a ladder for men, the poor, humble, distressed sinner like himself. If it was a ladder for God to come down in the flesh, it was a ladder for men to go up to God." — *Jacobus*. Every true house of God is a *gate of heaven* to every true worshipper. His soul rises toward heaven in worship and love, and heaven comes into his soul. The house of God should also be the gate through which many souls are brought into the kingdom of heaven.

VII. THE CONVERSION OF JACOB, vs. 18-22. In view of this experience, Jacob makes a vow to God, just as the Christian in our day consecrates himself to God in Jesus Christ as his Teacher, Saviour and King.

20. And Jacob vowed a vow. As God had been very good to him, and made him great and precious promises, Jacob now does all he can in return. He gives himself to God. Saying, If God will be with me. It has been charged that this vow was on the low plane of bargaining; but, as authorities in Hebrew assure us, "the word rendered 'if' in verse 20 is equivalent to 'inasmuch' or 'since.' 'Since God is going to be with me, and to keep me, and to give me all I need, and bring me back to my father's house in peace; since he has promised all this, and will assuredly perform it, I, for my part, pledge myself that he, and he alone, shall be my God.'"

21. Then shall the Lord (Jehovah, the covenant God) be my God. That is, I will utterly renounce and forsake all the idolatries and superstitions of the surrounding heathen; I will acknowledge, worship, and cleave to Jehovah alone, having no other God before him, and serving him in my own person and in my family, faithfully and reverently, all the days of my life.

The Proof that Jacob will Fulfil his Vow. I will surely give the tenth unto thee. This was one share of all his earnings, given to God in acknowledgment of his allegiance, just as men pay taxes to the government to which they belong. God's kingdom needs money, as do earthly kingdoms. The taxes not only show allegiance, but bind the people closer to their country. They have a part in all that is being done. The same is true of what we give to God. We do not know in what way Jacob gave it to God, but probably in sacrifices, altars and to the poor.

Concerning tithes see Gen. 14: 20; Heb. 7: 2-6; Lev. 27: 30-33; Deut. 12: 6, 7, 17-19; Mal. 3: 8-10.

Christ did not command tithe-paying, except as he indirectly commended the custom when he said, "Ye tithe mint, anise and cummin . . . these ye ought to have done" (Matt. 23: 23). There is no question, however, that our gifts to God's work should bear a definite relation to our income, growing as our income grows; and for most persons a tenth is a reasonable and just per cent to adopt, not as the maximum, but as the minimum of our gifts. Just as keeping one-seventh of our time peculiarly sacred to God through Sabbath observance helps us to keep all our time sacred to him, so setting apart one-tenth of our money to be used in distinctively religious work helps us to use all our money in ways of which God would approve.

And those who cannot give money can give service and help to those more needy than they, in many ways.

One of the greatest blessings God has given to us is to be in the company of the saints and angels in heaven, "who are all ministering spirits sent forth to do service."

THE LADDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

"St. Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

"All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end;
Our pleasures and our discontents
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

"We have not wings, we cannot soar,
But we have feet by which to climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

"The mighty pyramids of stone,
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

"Nor deem the irrevocable Past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain."

LESSON VIII. — November 24.

JACOB WINS ESAU. — Genesis 33 : I-II.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *A soft answer turneth away wrath.* — PROVERBS 15 : 1.

Devotional Reading : Psalm 46.

Additional Material for Teachers : Gen. 32 : 3-33 : 20.

Intermediate, Senior and Adult Topic : Winning an Offended Brother.

Additional Material : Prov. 18 : 19 ; Matt. 18 : 15-35 ; Luke 6 : 27-38 ; Rom. 12 : 17-21.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"A distinguished psychologist states that an investigation of many thousands of children has shown conclusively that there are four ways in which knowledge is gained by children.

"1. Some gain it most easily through the eye, as by reading.

"2. Some gain it better through the ear, by hearing the words read, or the story told.

"3. Some remember best through the tongue, by stating the truths themselves.

"4. Some receive the deepest expressions through some kind of work with their hands.

"Each person learns to some degree in all these ways. But as there is no little difference in different persons, it is well to use all methods in every lesson where it is possible."

What kind of pictures and how many can you draw in your imagination from the story in this lesson ?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The period covered by this lesson was 20 years, — 14 years for Rachel and 6 more in working for himself and Laban.

Beecher regards the time as 37 years, from B.C. 1784 when Jacob reached

Haran to B.C. 1747 when he returns to Palestine.

Place. — Laban's home in Haran, Mesopotamia ; and Peniel on the stream Jabbok near the Jordan.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The development of character in Jacob.

The beginnings of the twelve tribes.

Jacob as a business manager.

Compare Laban with Jacob for shrewdness and sharp bargains.

Why was Jacob afraid to meet Esau?

The wisdom of Jacob's plans.

His experience at Peniel.

Why was his name changed to Israel?

Reconciliation of Jacob and Esau.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Dr. Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel* is very good on this lesson. Professor Dods on *Genesis* is hardly fair to Jacob. Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. 1. Dr. Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, "Jacob the Aspiring." Geikie's *Old Testament Characters*. Robertson's *Sermons*, First Series.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Whittier's *Poems*, "Legend of St. Mark" and "Our Master." J. T. Trowbridge's "Rachel at the Well." "Jacob at Peniel," by Charles A. Fox.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Jacob Wins Esau by Growing into a Larger Manhood and Spiritual Life, by his Varied Experiences for 20 Years in Laban's Household.

- I. JACOB'S FIRST EXPERIENCE AT HARAN AT LABAN'S HOME FIELD, 29 : 1-20.
- II. THE BEGINNING OF THE TWELVE TRIBES.
- III. JACOB AS A BUSINESS MAN.
- IV. JACOB WITH HIS FAMILY RETURNING TO PALESTINE, 31 : 17-53.

- V. JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL, 32 : 24-32.
- VI. THE MEETING OF ESAU AND JACOB. THE RECONCILIATION, 33 : 1-11.

THE LESSON IN ART.

*Jacob with Laban, Le Loraine, Raphael, Schopin.**
Meeting of Jacob and Rachel, Raphael.
Jacob's Return to Canaan, Raphael.
Jacob Wrestling with the Angel, Doré, Gebhardt.*
Jacob and Esau Reconciled, Rembrandt.

I. JACOB'S FIRST EXPERIENCES AT HARAN IN MESOPOTAMIA AT LABAN'S HOME. 29 : 1-20. After Jacob's experience at Bethel, God's blessing and his consecration vow to God, Jacob became a new man, or as in our day he would be called, a Christian, seeking to live a better life. He was no longer so selfish, so sharp at a bargain. He never again, to our knowledge, gained his ends by lying and deceit as in the birthright transaction.

He was still shrewd, skilful, clever, but, so far as the record goes, was honest. He went on his long and sometimes dangerous way till he arrived at Haran, where his uncle Laban, brother of Rebekah, lived as a chieftain.

Illustration. Jacob had now come to His Second Chance. "In Florence, one of the treasures of art admired by thousands of visitors is Michelangelo's representation in marble of the young David. The shepherd boy stands with firm foothold, the stone grasped tightly in his right hand, ready to be sped on its holy errand. When the statue was unveiled, three hundred and fifty years ago, it caused an unparalleled sensation among all lovers of art. The work is, indeed, a marvellous piece of sculpture.

"But the strangely winning thing in the story of the statue is that it was the stone's *second chance*. A sculptor began work on a noble piece of marble, but, lacking skill, he only hacked and marred the block. It was then abandoned as spoiled and worthless, and cast aside. For years it lay in a back yard, soiled and blackened, half hidden among the rubbish. . . . At last Angelo saw it and at once perceived its possibilities. Under his skilful hand, the stone was cut into the fair and marvellous beauty which appears in the statue of David.

"In a like manner, when a life has been spoiled by unskilled and unscrupulous hands, so that it seems as if all were lost, there is One who can take the marred, disfigured block, now lying soiled amid the world's rubbish, and from it carve yet a marvel of beauty."

Jacob Meets Rachel. As Jacob drew near to the town during the heat of the day, he came to a field in which was a well, with several flocks of sheep around it waiting to be watered.

"Most of the cisterns are covered with a large, thick, flat stone, in the centre of which a hole is cut which forms the mouth of the cistern. This hole, in many instances, we found covered with a heavy stone to the removal of which two or three men were required." — *Robinson, II, p. 80.*

"Half-naked, fierce-looking men were drawing up water in leather buckets ; flock after flock were brought up, watered, and sent away ; and after all the men had ended their work, then several women and girls brought up their flocks, and drew water for them. . . . Thus it would have been with Rachel if Jacob had not rolled away the stone and watered her sheep." — *Thomson's Land and Book.*

Jacob met Rachel with her flock, and courteously rolled the stone away for her, before the men came. He found that she was his cousin and immediately fell in



Michael Angelo.
David.

love with her and kissed her. They went to her home together. In a month's acquaintance Jacob became engaged to Rachel, who was probably a girl of 11 or 12 years, very attractive and charming, and he agreed to work seven years for Laban, for the privilege of marrying her, without other reward. "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her" (20 : 20).

II. **THE BEGINNING OF THE TWELVE TRIBES.** At Haran in the domain of Laban, where Jacob married Rachel and Leah, were born eleven of the persons who became the ancestors of the twelve tribes, the twelfth being Benjamin who was born in Bethlehem, first named Ephrath.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Reuben, son of Leah. | 6. Naphtali, son of Bilhah, Rachel's maid. |
| 2. Simeon, son of Leah. | 7. Gad, son of Zilpah, Leah's maid. |
| 3. Levi, son of Leah. | 8. Asher, son of Zilpah, Leah's maid. |
| 4. Judah, son of Leah. | 9. Issacher, son of Leah. |
| 5. Dan, son of Bilhah, Rachel's maid. | 10. Zebulun, son of Leah. |
| | 11. Joseph, son of Rachel. |

III. **JACOB AS A BUSINESS MAN.** Jacob, since his conversion at Bethel, has been on the whole unusually strict and more than honest in his business dealings.

1. He was a wise business man in giving to God, — for religious purposes, the needs of the poor, etc., — one-tenth of his income. This kept him in close touch with God and enlarged his own spirit. It is wise for the young to begin in this way.

2. At Haran Jacob was willing to serve Laban for 14 years without pay, for the privilege of marrying his daughter Rachel.

3. During this period he seems to have lived as one of Laban's household as a business man, keeping his sheep and cattle, and greatly increasing Laban's wealth, so that Laban could say : "I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake" (30 : 27).

4. Jacob was honest, faithful, skilled, unselfish, so that he could say to Laban after 14 years, "Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming."

"And now when shall I provide for mine own house also?"

5. Jacob, instead of asking for a definite sum, agreed to receive from the flock of Laban only the spotted and speckled and brown, and the ring-streaked and black of the sheep and goats for his portion; the white ones to belong to Laban. This seemed a very small wage. Jacob's portion was sent away a three days' journey, so that the different flocks could not intermingle.

But by a device which Jacob had learned from his careful observation or from others, the speckled increased more rapidly than the pure white, and Jacob's flock outnumbered Laban's.

It is questioned by some whether Jacob's device was quite honest. But in fact Jacob brought much more to Laban than he ever received from Laban in the 20 years they lived together.

6. Note the business skill of Jacob in his dealings with Esau. As Esau was approaching with 400 armed men, he set about devising the best means of protection, by dividing his company into two sections, so that if one were attacked the other could escape. Jacob sent a present for Esau of 550 animals, — camels, goats, oxen, sheep and asses, arranged in nine detachments, with an interval between them, sent with profound and studied courtesy. The parcels coming one after another made far deeper impression.

Other skilful plans of Jacob are reported under the other headings.

There are several other lessons which may be drawn by those who wish to be successful business men or women.

IV. **JACOB WITH HIS FAMILY RETURNING TO PALESTINE,** 31 : I-53. We return now to the wide grazing fields of the chieftain Laban. He and his sons were three days from home shearing the sheep which he had gained largely through the business management and enterprise of Jacob, who had grown in grace and manliness during his sojourn in Haran. "His trials and disappointments had chastened his spirit, and given him more self-control. So that as he was now bidding a final farewell, he might well thank God and take courage." — *Dr. Blaikie*.

A moral maxim of Confucius is that "our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

Jacob had now been for 20 years in Haran, and the time had come when it was best, guided by God, for him to return to Palestine, the home country of the Jews for ages. He consulted with Rachel and Leah, and they decided to set out immediately, while Laban was three days' journey away from home. "The tents were quickly struck, movables were packed on the backs of camels, mules and asses. . . . Most of his people went on foot, it is said only that he set his wives and children on camels." — *Blakie*.

The caravan had reached the outskirts of Gilead on the eastern banks of the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee, before Laban at the top of his speed caught up with it. They came to a peaceful arrangement, and set up a pillar of stone as a memorial covenant, and named it Mizpah, "for he said The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another."

Laban returned home, and Jacob's company continued their journey to the Brook Jabbok.

The Map. In order to understand and realize what follows it will be necessary to have a map before us. Jacob came down towards the Jabbok. Esau came up from the south with 400 soldiers for his own defence, but Jacob was afraid, for he knew not what Esau would do. He was face to face with Esau and could not retreat. He needed help from a stronger than human arm. And he betook himself to prayer.

Jacob's Prayer. "The prayer he offered on this occasion was one of singular beauty and piety, humble and bold, simple and sublime, brief and comprehensive." It was based on God's previous promises.

Read carefully Gen. 32: 9-12. The wise business man will be a man of prayer.

V. JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL. 32: 24-32. Jacob had now come to the mouth of the Jabbok near the Jordan, about 40 miles south of the Sea of Galilee. Not far away Esau and his 400 were drawing near. In the darkness of the night he transfers his family over to the south side of the Jabbok, while he remains alone on the other bank.

(Major Conder thinks that the wives and children were left on the northern bank as more safe from attack, while he himself crossed over to the southern side, awaiting the coming of Esau. Most writers take the other view.)

Jacob was left alone (v. 24) "that he might seek anew in solitary prayer the divine protection." — *Amer. Com.* There in the darkness there wrestled a man with him, one seeming to be a man, but unseen in the darkness. The mysterious person is called an angel in Hosea 12: 4; and God in vs. 28, 30, and in Hosea 12: 3.

24. There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. At first Jacob may have thought that Esau had sent some assassin to slay him, or even come himself. "Every plunge of the Jabbok," says Dr. Whyte, "and every roar of the storm, made Jacob feel the smell of Esau's coat and the blow of his hairy hand." But Jacob soon perceived that his antagonist was more than mortal.

"*Wrestling in Prayer.*" This strange event is often used as a model for our prayers, and rightly, if the terrible earnestness of that midnight struggle is alone considered. We are to "come boldly to the throne of grace," "with all perseverance." "If you don't want a thing, don't ask for it. Such asking is the worst mockery of your King you can insult him with." — *Ruskin*. We are to pray as Luther prayed in great earnestness by the bedside of the dying Melancthon for an hour, and returned home, when the recovery of the reformer for his splendid later years was assured, saying to his wife, "God gave me my brother Melancthon back in answer to prayer."

But with all our fervent praying we must remember that our Father is always eager to "give good things to them that ask him." "Prayer is not a teasing and a coaxing of an unwilling God." — *Cuyler*. "Prayer is not the conquering of God's reluctance, but the taking hold of God's willingness." — *Phillips Brooks*.

25. "At first Jacob held his own. 'He saw that he prevailed not against him.' The strength that, years before, had rolled the stone from the well, for Rachel's sheep, was vigorous yet; and he was in no humor to submit. And thus do we all resist the love of God." — *F. B. Meyer*. But at last "he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh," the hollow socket of Jacob's hip-joint, "where passes the greatest of the sinews, descending through the leg to the ankle." — *Alford*. "And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint," Am. R., "was strained." Evidently this was not a mere struggle of Jacob with an awakened conscience. "Men do not become lame in imaginary conflicts." — *Meyer*.

Now "he had abandoned the posture of defence and resistance, and had fastened

1. AND Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

2. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

3. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

5. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children: and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

himself on to the angel, as a terrified child clasps its arms tightly around its father's neck." — *Meyer*. At last the angel broke the straining silence: "Let me go, for the day breaketh" (v. 26). Hebrew: "Send me away, for the gleam of the morning has gone up." — *Handy Commentary*. "The immortal must not be seen by mortals in that day which lights them to ordinary work." — *Alford*. Besides the daylight would bring Esau, and Jacob must go forth to meet him.

And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

27. And he said unto him, What is thy name? "The Hebrew frequently used 'name' as almost an equivalent of the 'personality' or 'character' or nature of the person or thing named." — *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*. And he said, Jacob. That is, "supplanter"; literally, *one who takes by the heel*, as Jacob took Esau when they were born, to hold him back. How the name sums up Jacob's life till he went to Laban, and saw the vision of the heavenly ladder. From that time he gradually outgrew his old life for a better.

28. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel, for as a Prince hast thou power with God and with man, and hast prevailed. The new name meant a new life. Thus Simon became Peter, and Saul became Paul, and Christ said to his disciples, "I no longer call you servants, but I have called you friends." Already Jacob was beginning to receive the blessing for which he begged.

This story is a great lesson in the power and necessity of earnest prayer. "Prayer takes all our heart, and all our soul, and all our strength, and all our mind, and all our life, sleeping and waking. Prayer is the princeliest, the noblest, the most un-earthly act on this side of heaven. Only pray, then; only pray aright, and enough, and it will change your whole nature as it changed Jacob's." — *Alexander Whyte*.

"Come, O thou Traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see;
My company before has gone,
And I am left alone with thee;
With thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

"Contented now upon my thigh
I halt, till life's short journey end;
All helplessness, all weakness, I
On thee alone for strength depend;
Nor have I power from thee to move;
Thy nature and thy name is Love."

— *Charles Wesley*.

"Prayer is first, and chiefly, the establishment of communion with God. It is the clearing of the blocked road which is crowded with all sorts of worldly obstacles. Prayer is a preparing of the way of the Lord. In one of the letters of Holman Hunt is an account of a conversation engaged in by Mr. Gladstone, Lord Tennyson, and himself. It turned on the subject of prayer, and each gave his view. When it came to Lord Tennyson's turn he gave this as his conception of the mystery of prayer: 'When I pray, I regard my prayer as the opening of the sluice-gates between me and the Infinite.' I do not know exactly what image Tennyson had in mind. It might have been the figure of the sluice-gate of a canal. A boat coming along the canal enters a lock and the gates are shut behind it and the gates are shut before it, and now it looks as if the boat is imprisoned. Then the boatman lifts the sluice-gates, and the waters from the higher levels begin to flow into the lower levels, and the boat begins to rise by the power of the elevating force that comes from the heights. And when it attains a certain level the boat moves out again on a loftier plane of progress." — *J. H. Jowett, D.D.*

VI. THE MEETING OF ESAU AND JACOB, AND THE RECONCILIATION OF THE TWO BROTHERS, 33: I-II. Jacob has now had two great heavenly

6. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves :

7. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves : and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

8. And he said, What *meanest* thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, *These are* to find grace in the sight of my lord.

9. And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

10. And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11. Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took *it*.

experiences. The meeting with God when he saw the stairway to heaven and God, leading to his conversion; and now again the culmination of his inward battles against sin and doubt and troubles and trials in which God tests him and develops his powers, as one wrestling with another grows strong, refusing to yield, and insisting "I will not let thee go except thou bless me."

Now the day breaks. The new Israel looks, and, behold Esau with his 400. He is not quite sure of Esau's intentions, and therefore arranges his family in the reverse order of their preciousness to him, and then goes before them and meets Esau, so that if any one should be in danger Israel himself would stand the brunt.

But there was no danger. The new Jacob, the man of peace, like a brave man bowed himself before the man of war. "Esau must be disarmed as the traveller in the fable was divested of his cloak — not by the wind but by the sun; not by boisterous threatening, but by the arts of gentle affection." — *Blaikie*. Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. "Mark the tenderness of Jacob" and of Esau too, as Jacob introduced his family to him one by one, in answer to Esau who lifted up his eyes and saw the women and the children, and said, Who are those with thee?

Jacob answers : The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

One by one they drew near to Esau and bowed themselves.

Esau asks again : What *meanest* thou by all this drove which I met? (the 550 of the choicest of Jacob's cattle going in nine separate parcels to meet Esau).

Jacob says in effect that they were intended as a present.

Esau said : I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself. As chieftain of Edom he did have enough.

Jacob persuaded Esau to take the present, for he had enough also.

But especially had the meeting of the brothers been very gracious and courteous. The storm that threatened on the horizon passed away; and a serene and perfect day filled the two brothers with the peace of God.

"O think of a true word, a good word, a kind word,

To whisper in somebody's ear,

Then do not delay it, but hasten to say it,

And be glad there is some one to hear."

— *Nixon Waterman*.

"As soldiers in life's battle, Lord,

Grant me that courage high

That dares, if need be, fail,"

But dares not fail to try."

— *Mary Wells*.

"John Watson of Liverpool asked himself what he would do differently if he were to have his life over again and boldly decided that if he were to have another chance he would make his a more comforting ministry. He had realized thoroughly how much people needed strength and invigoration. Life easily becomes apathetic and it needs tonic and inspiration."

"But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which spitefully use you." — Luke 6 : 27, 28.

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." — Rom. 12 : 21.

LESSON IX. — December 1.

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS. — Genesis 37: 18-28.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Hatred stirreth up strifes;
But love covereth all transgressions.* — PROVERBS 10: 12.

Devotional Reading: Psalm 4.

Additional Material for Teachers: Gen. 37: 1-36.

Primary Memory Verse: Let us love one another. — 1 John 4: 7.

Junior Memory Verse: Rom. 12: 21.

Intermediate, Senior, and Adult Topic: Seeds and Fruits of Family Discord.

Additional Material: Gen. 13: 8; Ps. 133: 1; Prov. 6: 16-19; 1 Cor. 13;
Col. 3: 18-4: 1.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"When any truth seems commonplace to us it has lost its power for us. How can that power be restored or discovered? Coleridge gives the secret when he says: 'To restore a commonplace truth to its first uncommon lustre, you need only *translate it into action.*'"

In this lesson there is a great deal of action. It needs the map with its changing situations. The places on the map should be visualized, and the lines of travel.

Then the whole lesson is practically a series of vivid scenes, each one rapidly following after another and each one bearing its instruction on its wings.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Joseph — a view of his character.

The evil of Jacob's favoritism.

Joseph's two dreams and their meaning and truth.

What does his reporting his dreams show as to his character?

Had his brothers a good reason for hating him?

Was their treatment of him something like college or schoolboy hazing? Is hazing mean?

The story of his brothers selling him.

His character as differing from his.

How did they deceive their father? and how did that remind Jacob of his own earlier conduct to his father?

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

All Commentaries on Genesis. *Bible Geography*, by Rev. W. W. Smith, M.D. (Illustrated.)

Books on Joseph. *Joseph and the Land of Egypt*, by Professor Sayce, in *The Temple Series of Bible Characters*; *Joseph*, by F. B. Meyer; *Joseph the Prime Minister*, by Taylor; *The Story of Joseph*, by J. R. Miller; *The Life and Times of Joseph*, by Tomkins; Wharton's *Famous Men of the Old Testament*; Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*; *The Dream of Youth*, by Hugh Black; Chapters in Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, and his *Old Testament Char-*

acters; Alexander Whyte's *Bible Characters*; Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel*; Thornley Smith's *Joseph and His Times*; *Joseph the Dreamer*, by Bird.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Joseph was 17 years old when he was carried away from Palestine into Egypt. According to Professor Beecher this date was about 1736 B.C. Jacob was 109 years old at that time.

Place. — At or near Hebron, the home of Jacob, twenty miles south of Jerusalem. Shechem, in Samaria, was fifty miles north of Hebron. Dothan, fifteen miles north of Shechem.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Story of a Good Boy

Growing Better Amid Strange and Bitter Experiences.

SCENE I. JOSEPH IN HIS BOYHOOD. THE FAVORITE SON, 37: 1-3.

SCENE II. HOW JOSEPH GREW IN CHARACTER, vs. 4-11.

SCENE III. JOSEPH'S DREAMS AND VISIONS, vs. 5-11.

SCENE IV. JOSEPH SENT AS A MESSENGER TO HIS DISTANT BROTHERS, vs. 12-24.

SCENE V. JOSEPH SOLD AS A SLAVE, vs. 25-28.

SCENE VI. THE TRAGEDY OF THE FATHER, vs. 29-35.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Joseph's Dream, Bonazza, Crespi,*

Raphael, Rembrandt, Scheiets.*

Joseph Sold by his Brethren, Schopin,*

Doré,* Raphael.

Joseph's Coat Brought to Jacob, Warren,* Rethel.

Mourning of Jacob, Hoct,* Schopin,* Rembrandt.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Hale's "Hands Off" in *Christmas in a Palace*. Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, Vol. III., Chapter III. Longfellow's "The Sand of the Desert in an Hour-glass." George Herbert's "Joseph's

Coat." "Joseph," by Mrs. C. F. Alexander. "Envy," and "Per Pacem ad Lucem," by Adelaide Procter. "Joseph and his Brethren," a remarkable dramatic poem by Charles Wells. The ancient tale of the Egyptian brothers, given by Professor Sayce.

INTRODUCTION. "The last division of the Book of Genesis is occupied almost entirely with the history of Joseph, at once the most artistic, and the most fascinating of Old Testament biographies. It is distinguished first of all by the dramatic unity of a clearly conceived plot, the unfolding of which exhibits the conflict between character and circumstances, and the triumph of moral and personal forces amidst the chances and vicissitudes of human affairs." — *Int. Crit. Com.*

"In all ancient history, certainly in all ancient Oriental history, it is difficult to match the pathetic interest of the story of Joseph. Well as we know it, we cannot read it over again without emotion, without being touched by the simple nobleness of its hero, and the generous warmth of his character. The story is told with consummate skill." — *Prof. A. H. Sayce, D.D.*

SCENE I. JOSEPH IN HIS BOYHOOD. THE FAVORITE SON, vs. 1-4.

Joseph was born in Mesopotamia in the vicinity of Haran. He was the son of Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife. He was the eleventh son of Jacob, and the elder of her two boys. She died in giving birth to Benjamin, on her way from Haran to Palestine.

Jacob went on and settled in Hebron, 20 miles south of Jerusalem. Here he lived as a chieftain with his 12 sons, and here was the gathering place of his herds of camels and sheep and goats under the care of his sons, who at times would lead them to distant places in search of the best pastures open to all shepherds.

Joseph's training as a boy in the home for the next ten years of his life till he was a lusty and trusty boy of 17. Being Rachel's older son, he inherited from her a beauty of face, of manner, and of character which had the profoundest influence upon his fortunes. At the same time, from his father Jacob and his grandmother Rebekah the lad inherited quickness of intellect, readiness to grasp advantages, the marked ability to get on in the world.

"Joseph sitting at the feet of the blind old Isaac, and listening with wonder to the recital of his experience on that eventful day when he was rescued from sacrifice by the angel's intervention, and had his first insight into the world beyond." — *William M. Taylor, D.D.*

"The childhood of Joseph in Palestine was passed in the midst of a civilization that was mainly Babylonian. It was prominently literary, with schools where he could learn to read and write. He acquired the rudiments of learning like the children of other wealthy parents." (See *Sayce in Temple Bible Series*.) This schooling, — learning two or more languages, belonging to different lands, — was one of the conditions by which, later, he could become governor of Egypt.

Joseph himself was in great danger of being spoiled by his father's petting. He was saved by his naturally good disposition and his brothers' opposition. All those that are favorites need to guard themselves lest they may grow selfish, proud, and overbearing.

But he was also in danger of yielding to the surrounding influences of his older brothers. "Out of their father's sight they shook off any little restraint which his presence may have inspired. Their scandalous behavior became the talk of every neighborhood they chanced to visit; and Joseph hearing it, as in duty bound, reported it to Jacob." — *Pulpit Com.* And yet all through their lives we can also detect the influences of piety and home training. They were very different from those who had no good influences at home.

"These ten sons were most of them considerably older than Joseph. The readers of Genesis, chaps. 34, 35, 37, and 38, will see that they were 'hard boys.' Especially do the worst elements of depraved character appear in their treatment of their younger brother Joseph." — *Cowles*.

Joseph was a remarkable young man, as we have seen, living under the best influences of his father, after his conversion at Bethel, and of his mother, Rachel the beloved. He was not quite perfect, for he was a very human boy, and at this time had not escaped wholly the secluded influences of his early training.

Let the younger classes ask themselves the following questions that some one has printed, — "What kind of a boy would you like to be?"

"What kind of a girl would you like to be?"

It might help them all if they could "see ourselves as others see us," by reversing the questions, —

Girls, what is your ideal of a perfect boy?

Boys, what is your ideal of a perfect girl?

A Story: I want to be an angel. Hamilton, in his *Talks to Young People*, tells the story of a restless and mischievous boy, who when he grew tired of tormenting his sisters, marched about the room singing, —

"I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand,

"A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand."

His grandmother stopped him: Should you like to be apprenticed to the angel-business?

He did not know that the angels did any kind of work. He thought they walked about with shining crowns, and played harps.

His grandmother said that the angels worked hard, and she pointed to the Bible record of what they did, and bade him look up the passages which told us the work of the angels, how many people they helped, how full of kind deeds they were.

The boy decided that it might be good to be an angel.

Joseph was one who wanted to be as good and useful as an angel, and he strove all his life to be good, useful, helpful, and perfect.

SCENE II. HOW JOSEPH GREW IN CHARACTER AND USEFULNESS.

vs. 4-11. He grew as Israel in the wilderness grew under divine tutelage, as recorded in Deut. 8: 2. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no."

First. Joseph unconsciously angered his older brothers because he was the favorite of his father, who was partial to him.

Second. Joseph was feeding the flock with his brethren, the sons of Bilhah and of Zilpah (Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher), the maids of Leah and Rachel, probably Syrians. In some way Joseph learned of their misconduct toward others, or toward their father, idleness, dishonesty or crime, we know not what. And either as his father's messenger, or as overseer, he reported the facts to his father. We are not obliged to suppose that Joseph was a gratuitous talebearer, or that because of any personal feeling he carried their evil report to their father. Joseph probably went from one to the other with messages and errands, and kept up the communication with their home.

The brothers were indignant at Joseph and "hated him" as a talebearer; and "could not speak peaceably unto him."

Talebearing is the reporting with delight the sins of others, in order to injure them, and to exalt ourselves as virtuous by contrast, or at least to report carelessly, with no high motive, but only a love of saying evil things about others. This is intensely mean, and is as intensely unpopular.

That was not Joseph's plan. There are times when it is not only wise, but essential to the wrong-doer's salvation, to report their evil deeds. Recall the work of Anthony Comstock in stopping the villains who were undermining the morals of the school children all over the country. It took a hero to do it; and it made the evil doers hate him. They tried again and again to kill him.

Joseph may have warned only Jacob. And they two may have tried to save the evil doers, and keep the knowledge of their crimes secret in order to persuade them to do better. But the report required heroism in Joseph; and wisdom and love.

Third Cause of his Brothers' Hatred, was his father's gift of the coat of many colors. "Though not necessarily implied in the Hebrew words used, it may have been of 'many' colors, for in the tomb at Beni Hassan Semitic visitors are seen dressed in robes of white, red, and blue, apparently made of a patchwork of separate small pieces. It is, moreover, usual still in the East to dress favorite children in this way." — *Geikie*.

"This sort of robe was worn only by princes, by the opulent and noble, by kings' sons, and by those who had no need to toil for their living. All who had to win their bread by labor wore short, colored garments that did not show stain, or cramp the free movement of the limbs. Such was the lot of Jacob's sons, and such the garments they wore." "Joseph's coat, moreover, was probably richly embroidered, and made of fine Egyptian linen."

"Jacob's unwise gift marked Joseph as the prospective head of the clan" instead of Reuben the eldest son.

It is easy to see why the ten elder brothers envied and hated Joseph.

(1) He was placed over all the older men in the family. They keenly resented the distinction.

(2) The princely dress given to Joseph by his father which "did not excite his brothers' ridicule, but their envy and hatred." — *Dr. Dods*.

(3) They could not but see that Joseph had advantages over them, and in every way was their superior. For "in Joseph we meet a type of character rare in any race, a combination of grace and power and hereditary dignity, self-control, and incorruptible purity. He inherited and combined Abraham's dignity and capacity, Isaac's purity, and power of self-devotion, Jacob's cleverness, and his mother's beauty and management." — *Dods*.

All this was the cause of his brothers' envy of Joseph, increasing their hatred. The elder sons, however much they disliked this state of things, had chiefly themselves to blame, for they were not so lovely, and did not treat their father in the same attentive and loving manner.

(4) It is quite possible that the youthful Joseph may have felt and shown in some degree his consciousness of superiority.

SCENE III. JOSEPH'S DREAMS AND VISIONS. vs. 5-11. *Fourth Cause of the Brothers' Hatred.* "One day during harvest time in the fields of Mamre, two miles north of Hebron, Joseph and his brothers had all been at work in the fields cutting down the yellow wheat, the strong men taking armfuls with sharp sickles, while Joseph and the younger ones, with the women, made bands of straw and bound the wheat into sheaves, which they laid on the ground." — *Robert Bird*. After such a day Joseph dreamed that his sheaf had stood proudly upright in the field, while his brothers' sheaves came around it, humbly bowing down to the ground.

"And he told it his brethren." "Joseph acted with questionable modesty and propriety, and with unquestionable imprudence; but it must be remembered that he was still a mere boy." — *Todd*. Joseph did not interpret his dreams, but told them in a questioning way, as if asking "What can these things mean?"

The bowing of their sheaves before his was a token that they were to acknowledge him as their superior, as actually happened years afterward in Egypt.

v. 8. "And his brethren said unto him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words."

Again Joseph dreamed a still more startling dream. He was born in a land where the wise men studied the stars with especial assiduity, and where every one believed that they controlled human destiny. "He had often lain upon his back by the camp fire until he seemed to be up among them." One night soon after the other dream he went to sleep gazing up at the bright starry sky, and dreamed not only that eleven stars, representing his eleven brothers, but that the sun and moon, his father and mother, came and bowed down before him. "The double dream indicates the certainty of the fulfilment (see Gen. 41:32)." — *Driver*.

The Value of the Dreams to Joseph. "The two dreams were evidently intended to be signs of the divine purpose toward him, by possessing the clearness of special prophecy; yet were couched in such imagery as not to inform him prematurely of his destiny, and only to be understood after their fulfilment." — *Ruskin, in Stones of Venice*.

"They very obviously shadow forth Joseph as having kingly authority over his father, mother and brethren. The scene of the first is laid in the wheat field, where he and his brethren are symbolized by the sheaves. But to repeat and solemnly deepen the impression, the scene of the second is laid in heaven, and now not only his brethren, but his father and mother (Leah, probably, since Rachel was dead), under heavenly symbols, bow down, not to his star but to him." — *Newhall*.

These dreams would sustain him in the trials which were to come. They were a preparation for the time when his destiny hung upon his interpreting dreams. They were an ideal before him, a vision of what might be, and what would be if he became worthy of realizing them.

In Joel (2:28, 29) there is a prophecy quoted in the Acts (2:17, 18) that "your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." Visions and dreams bring before us the ideals and possibilities which we can press forward to make real and true. The whole church should keep before her the vision of a perfect church, a perfect world, the city of God.

"In youth, beside the lonely sea,
Voices and visions came to me;

"In every wind I felt the stir
Of some celestial messenger."
— *Aldrich's Sea-Longings.*

There is but one true port for which we should steer, the kingdom of heaven on earth, in ourselves and in all the world. It is the celestial city, a perfect character like that of Jesus Christ begun on earth and completed in the immortal life, the whole world transformed into the city of God.

"O young mariner,
Down to the haven
Call your companions.
Launch your vessel,
Acrowd your canvas,

"And ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the gleam."

— *Tennyson.*

Why Joseph Told his Dreams. "In the simplicity of a guileless mind, and with the natural proneness of members of a family to tell in the morning the dreams they have had, Joseph tells to the rest what seems to himself interesting." — *Dr. Dod's.*

v. 10. "And he told it to his father, and to his brethren : and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed ? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth ?"

The father, however, kept Joseph's saying in his mind, from a feeling that it might prove a true prophecy.

"Had Joseph been but a little older, and had he been but once or twice at Dothan, he would have hidden his dreams in his heart like so many guilty secrets. But, innocent child that he was, he must up and out of his bed, and tell all his dreams to all the house." — *Whyte.*

Some have thought that Joseph showed a trace of conceit, when he told his brothers of what he had dreamed. Are they not truer judges of character who see in this act "an open frankness, unsuspecting because unconscious of evil" ? "Artlessness in a boy betokens genuineness in the man."

Visions and dreams are good things in young or old, if only they lead all the powers of body and soul to seek their realization. The vision of heaven, the vision of the millennium, the vision of the city of God, are magnificent inspirations to the whole Christian church, irradiating it with

"The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet's dream."

The Effect upon his Brothers. v. 11. "And his brothers envied him." They were intensely angry with Joseph. The root of all this sin was Envy, and Jealousy, and Selfishness the horrid mother of both, and the whole den of wild beasts of sin connected with them. Or perhaps we would better call it a jungle of Upas trees, for out of the soil of selfishness grow not only envy, and jealousy, but pride, hatred, strife, covetousness, ingratitude, and the like.

"Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach." — *Thomson.*

Whosoever does well and is faithful and true, where others are dishonest and false, must expect to be opposed and hated. Every effort will be made to injure their character, to drag them into the mire, and to make it appear that they are no better than those who assail them.

Illustrations. Envy is "sharper than a serpent's tooth," and deadlier than "the poison of asps."

The best fruit trees are most pelted with stones.

"Envy will merit, as its shade pursue;
But like a shadow, prove the substance true." — *Pope.*

"Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,
Thou shalt not escape calumny." — *Shakespeare.*

"That thou art blamed shalt not be thy defect;
For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;
So thou be good, slander doth yet approve
Thy worth the greater." — *Shakespeare.*

Illustration. "The Athenians became tired of hearing Aristides called 'the just,' and they banished him to get rid of that which was disagreeable ; so those who are unprincipled become intolerant of the integrity of the upright who are working at their side, and do everything in their power to make them uncomfortable." — *W. M. Taylor.*

SCENE IV. JACOB SENDS JOSEPH AS A MESSENGER TO HIS TEN OTHER SONS IN FAR-AWAY PASTURES, vs. 12-24. Some time after Joseph had told his dreams, and it was presumed that the ten brothers had got over their anger and envy, they took their flocks and herds to Shechem, 50 miles north of Hebron, the home estate. Perhaps to keep them separate from the flocks belonging to Jacob. Perhaps because there was some land there belonging to the family through Abraham. Perhaps the pasturage was better, and their own had been exhausted. Possibly they were willing to get beyond the criticism of their father and Joseph in pursuing the conduct they enjoyed.

Here Jacob had purchased a parcel of ground and dug a well. The region of Shechem "is perhaps the most fertile as well as the most beautiful in all Palestine."

Probably Jacob for several reasons felt anxious for the welfare of his sons and for the flocks. Jacob's sons had conquered Shechem, as is told in Genesis 34; but the family must have been very powerful to venture to send their flocks 50 miles from the home in Hebron. However, in that place, after what had happened, they must have been surrounded by enemies, and Jacob might well have feared for their welfare, and wished to be assured of their safety. "Jacob may have thought that the people of Shechem, remembering what his sons had done to them (Gen. 34), had perhaps set upon them, and taken them prisoners and captured their cattle, for he grew anxious about them." — *Bird*.

Under these circumstances Jacob said to Joseph, "Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks, and bring me word again." Joseph was brave, and ready to go. His brothers might speak roughly to him, but he had no thought of any serious danger. He had done only right.

"Joseph's camel was got ready with its harness and its bell. Large baskets were slung on each side, which were filled with thin cakes of bread, eggs, small cheeses, honeycomb, bunches of raisins, cakes of figs, parched corn, and bottles of oil and wine. . . . His black goat's skin bag was on his shoulder, with stones for his slings, while his shepherd's club and long stick were fastened to his saddle (his rod and staff), — and his strong red dog ran by his side." — *Dr. Bird*. He wore his coat of many colors, that marked the handsome boy as a chief's son.

When he reached Shechem, he found that his shepherd brothers had gone on to Dothan, about 12 miles further on to the north.

"But here we are at Shechem, and the other brothers ought to be about here somewhere. 'Hello there, mister,' he calls out to a man in a field, 'Where are those Hebron fellows with the sheep?' 'Heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan, there will be better pasture there,' " is the reply.

"So we trudge up the valley and over the hills to the great green pasture-land of Dothan." — *S. S. Times*.

"The situation is a choice one on account of its abundant fountains. Two ancient wells and a number of empty cisterns are there. Great herds of cattle, sheep and goats from the neighboring abundant pastures may always be found there in the afternoon, drinking from the water, and browsing in the shade." — *E. W. G. Masterman, in Hastings' Bib. Dic.*

Thomson (*Land and Book*) suggests that the brothers may have watered their flocks at the well, and may have been seated around it on the grass when they caught their first glimpse of Joseph, riding on his camel, clothed in his robe of many colors



Joseph's Well — Dothan.

18. And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

19. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

20. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21. And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit that *is* in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

23. And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, *his* coat of *many* colours that *was* on him;

24. And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it.

which was to them like a red rag to a bull. The sight crystallized their envy, and determined them to wreak their vengeance on him.

19, 20. Behold, this dreamer cometh. Let us slay him.

22. The first savage plan, to kill Joseph outright, was frustrated by Reuben. While he proposed the still more horrible death of slow starvation, it was really with the purpose of coming back later and delivering his brother. But how much more noble he would have appeared if he had not tried this underhand and ineffective method, but boldly rebuked his brothers' cruelty, and shamed them from their murderous purpose! Cast him into this pit. Thousands of such cisterns still exist in upper Galilee, excavated out of the solid rock or built of stones and plastered, to hold rain water in that dry climate. They are "trap-like and deceptive cisterns, the mouths of which are about the size of the coal-hole in the pavement of a London street, of a demijohn shape, and with smooth sides, from which escape would be hopeless." — *Laurence Oliphant in Blackwood's Magazine*. The pit was empty. "In such a place he was left to die — under the ground, sinking in the mire, his flesh creeping at the touch of unseen slimy creatures, in darkness, alone." — *Dods*.

25. They sat down to eat bread. Doubtless they feasted on the very dainties their father had sent them by the hand of Joseph. This heartless merrymaking went on while their brother's cries were sounding from his prison. Afterwards, when they in turn were in prison in Egypt, they remembered how they "saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought them, and they would not hear." See Gen. 42: 21.

SCENE V. JOSEPH SOLD AS A SLAVE INTO EGYPT, vs. 25-28. While the brothers were eating their meal, with Joseph not far away in the pit, they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold, a travelling company of Ishmaelites (Am. R., "Ishmaelites") came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. "Gilead was a country on the east of the Jordan, which took its name from a group of mountains so called, extending from Mount Hermon to the south of the brooks Jabbok and Arnon." — *T. Smith*.

Judah would save Joseph from death; for there was no gain in letting him die.

27. Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content (Am. R., "hearkened unto him").

28. Then there passed by (as a part of the caravan) Midianites, merchantmen. The particular part of the caravan which bought Joseph. They were joined with the Ishmaelites, from whom the caravan took its name. Sold Joseph . . . for twenty pieces of silver. The money was probably in rings or pieces (shekels), and silver is always mentioned in the records of that early age before gold, on account of its rarity. The exact value is unknown. The Midianites belonged to the region east of the Lower Jordan, and of the Dead Sea toward the Red Sea.

This experience was doubtless best for Joseph. It kept him from being spoiled, and developed his self-reliance and his trust in God. It was best for his brothers, for it made them more humane. It was best for the great nation into which the

25. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt.

26. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit *is it* if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

27. Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he *is* our brother *and* our flesh. And his brethren were content.

28. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen: and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty *pieces* of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

family of Jacob was to develop, since it withdrew them from the contamination of Canaanitic idolatry, brought them in contact with Egyptian civilization, and in their escape from bondage taught them the fatherhood of God.

The experience of Joseph in slavery was one of the essential links by which he accomplished his great work. It is hardly possible to think of a better way of attaining his final purpose.

Hands Off. An Illustration. Edward Everett Hale, in his story "Hands Off," in his *Christmas in a Palace*, uses these events to show how fortunate it is that our short-sighted policy is not permitted to interfere with God's all-wise providence. The story represents a man in another stage of existence, looking down upon Joseph as he is in the hands of the Midianites. Being an active, ingenious young man, Joseph succeeded in escaping from his captors on the first night of his captivity, and had just reached the outer limits of the camp when a yellow dog barked, awakened his captors, and Joseph was returned to his captivity. The on-looker wanted to interfere and kill the dog before he had awakened the camp. Then Joseph would have reached home in safety, and great sorrows have been avoided. But his guardian said, "Hands off." And to let him see the evil of his interference, he took him to a world where he could try the experiment. There he killed the dog. Joseph reached home in safety, his father rejoiced, his brothers were comforted. But when the famine came, there had been no Joseph to lay up the corn. Palestine and Egypt were starved. Great numbers died, and the rest were so weakened that they were destroyed by the savage Hittites. Civilization was destroyed. Egypt blotted out. Greece and Rome remained in a barbarous state. The whole history of the world was changed, and countless evils came because a man in his ignorant wisdom killed a dog and saved Joseph from present trouble to his future loss.

Learn "that in seeking to defeat God's purposes, we are all the while unconsciously helping on their fulfilment."

Learn "that we do not get rid of responsibility by putting it out of sight."

Note. "There is a retributive element in our troubles. Jacob in his earlier days had deceived his father Isaac: and now his children conspire to impose upon him. This was one of his 'chickens that came home to roost.'" — *Dr. Wm. M. Taylor.*

SCENE VI. THE TRAGEDY OF THE FATHER, vs. 29-35. Reuben returned unto the pit. Reuben had planned to rescue Joseph, and send him home safely, as soon as his brothers had left him. He probably went into another part of the field to attend to the sheep, and to draw the rest away from the pit. When he returned he found his brother gone. And he rent his clothes. The Oriental sign of grief.

31. And they took Joseph's coat, etc. They knew that they must again meet their father, and to him some reason must be assigned for the non-appearance of his beloved son. They dare not tell the truth, therefore they make lies their refuge.

32. Sent the coat. By a servant. And they brought it to their father; and said. All this was done and said through the servant whom they had sent. This have we found. Almost every sin requires lying to be added to it. The sons were guilty of (1) cruelty, (2) cowardice, (3) falsehood, (4) insolence.

33. My son's coat. Jacob's words are most touching. Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. There was no other way to account for the bloody coat. He put on

sackcloth and refused to be comforted. For years these brothers had to witness their father's sorrow. It was a bitter medicine, but it helped to make them more worthy.

Partly, too, was Jacob's sorrow intensified by the consciousness of his own bad example and neglect of his sons in his anxiety for worldly prosperity. He could see that his own hand had sown some of the seed of this dreadful harvest.



LESSON X. — December 8.

JOSEPH MADE RULER OF EGYPT. — Genesis 41:33-44.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much.*
— LUKE 16:10.

Devotional Reading : Ps. 48.

Teachers' Readings : Gen., chaps. 39-41.

Intermediate, Senior and Adult Topic : Rewards of Faithfulness.

Additional Material : Matt. 25:14-20; Luke 19:11-27; Rev. 2:10.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The teacher can attract the attention of the class, by showing the helpfulness of the right kind of biography of great and good men.

In my early life I had a strong dislike of all biographies, because in those days they told us rather the heights to which their heroes climbed, but showed us very little of the way. Like Emerson they bade us, "Hitch your wagon to a star," but the star was beyond our grasp, and they did not tell us how to reach it. I well remember the first biography I ever enjoyed — Hugh Miller's *My Schools and Schoolmasters* — because it related not merely his attainments, but the schools through which he gained them. It traced the path by which he climbed. The best modern biographies are written on this plan. But the Bible Biographies followed this ideal thousands of years ago. And this is beautifully true of the story of Joseph.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Joseph was exalted at the close of his two years of prison, B.C. 1723 (Beecher). Thus the seventh year of plenty would be B.C. 1717, and the seventh year of famine, B.C. 1710.

Place. — Probably Zoan or Tanis, the modern San, near one of the mouths of the Nile.

Joseph 30 years old when he became ruler.

Jacob still living with his eleven sons.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Joseph's faithfulness in slavery and in prison.

What in his character led him to this?

In what way the Lord was with him and made him prosperous.

How did his interpretation of the dreams of the two officers lead to his exaltation?

Pharaoh's dream.

The seven years of plenty, and the seven years of famine, and their cause.

Joseph's plans to save the people of Egypt.

Joseph's position in the kingdom.

The real source of his success.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Scientific Confirmations of Old Testament History, by Prof. G. Frederick Wright.

The volumes on Joseph in the previous lesson.

The *Commentaries on Genesis*. Brugsch's *Egypt under the Pharaohs*. A valuable chapter in Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*. Osburn's *Monumental History of Egypt*. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*. Chapters viii and ix in Rawlinson's *Ancient Egypt*.

One Hundred Bible Stories, by Robert Bird. *Stories from the Old Testament*, by Mrs. L. Haskell.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Joseph Made Ruler of Egypt.

The Fruits of Faithfulness.

- I. JOSEPH SOLD AS A SLAVE TO THE CAPTAIN OF PHARAOH'S GUARD, 39:1-6.
- II. JOSEPH IN PRISON BECOMES AN INTERPRETER OF DREAMS, 39:21-23; 40:1-23.
- III. JOSEPH'S OPPORTUNITY HAS COME. HE INTERPRETS THE DREAMS OF PHARAOH, 41:1-32.
- IV. JOSEPH SUGGESTS A PLAN TO SAVE THE EGYPTIANS FROM FAMINE, 41:33-36.
- V. PHARAOH MAKES JOSEPH RULER OF EGYPT, 41:37-45.
- VI. JOSEPH CARRIES OUT HIS PLANS, 41:46-57.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

"Joseph," by John Henry Newman.
 "Joseph," by Mrs. C. F. Alexander.
Olney Hymns, by John Newton, Hymn XI. Picture of the famine in Fanny Crosby's "The meeting of Jacob and Joseph." "The Famine," in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*.

Hymns: "He leadeth me: O blessed thought"; "All the way my Saviour leads me"; "O Master, let me walk with thee."

THE LESSON IN ART.

Pharaoh's Dream, Raphael.
Joseph before Pharaoh, Raphael.
Joseph Interpreting Pharaoh's Dreams, La Tometo*, Doré,* Raphael, Romano.

INTRODUCTION. In our last lesson we left Joseph in the Midianites' caravan on his way to Egypt to be sold as a slave. Many adventures were to be his lot during the next few years. But everywhere and always he was faithful to God and man.

Note. It is related that at a gathering of well-known Boston authors it was proposed that each should write on a piece of paper the short story that, of all the world's literature, he thought the most perfect; and when the papers were examined it was found that all had named the story of Joseph. This story possesses all the elements of a perfect plot; indeed, it has a double plot, that concerning Joseph and that concerning the brothers; and the two are most skilfully interwoven. It presents the struggle between virtue and vice which constitutes the world's greatest tragedy or highest triumph. Perhaps the main reason for the popularity of the story is that it all comes out so happily; and with our present lesson we have reached the turn of Joseph's fortunes, from the depths of misery to the height of splendor and power.

"See if you can discover in the lesson:

"A man who was 'slow pay.'"

"A man who was ready."

"A call for a barber."

"A Yankee for forehandedness."

"A time to put your best foot forward."

"A rule for good times."

"Some fine jewelry."

— *S. S. Times*.

SCENE I. JOSEPH SOLD AS A SLAVE TO POTIPHAR, CAPTAIN OF PHARAOH'S GUARD, Gen. 39:1-6. "A Hyksos Pharaoh [shepherd kings] was on the throne, and the Egyptian capital, consequently, was probably at Zoan [on one of the mouths of the Nile]. It was thus close to the borders of Canaan, and unlike Thebes, the future capital of the country, was easy of access from Palestine." — *Sayce*.

"Joseph was not so ignorant of the Egyptian language of that time, that he was unable to speak it. Joseph talked with Pharaoh. Altogether the times were exactly suited to the introduction of Joseph: his language would be understood." — *Prof. Melvin G. Kyle, LL.D.*



Sphinx of Zoan, with the Portrait of the Shepherd King.

Potiphar soon found out the real character of Joseph. The Lord was with Joseph . . . and the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake. This was because, "though stripped of his coat, he had not been stripped of his character." — *Meyer*.

Potiphar soon learned Joseph's capacity for business, his genial power of devoting himself to other men's interests, his clear integrity, so that he could find no more trustworthy servant in all Egypt. For the Lord was with Joseph, and Joseph dwelt in the palace of Potiphar.

"And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field."

It was a fortunate thing for Joseph, with his native abilities, to be set down in the midst of the greatest nation the world had yet known. With widely open, observant eyes, the country lad saw on every side, as he entered Egypt, the splendid tokens of a well-developed civilization. "It was a bewildering sight, telling him of beauty, wealth, and gaiety such as he could not have believed possible." — *Bird*.

Egypt was a land of learning, of the arts, of literature, of manufactures and commerce. All this was a magnificent stimulus to Joseph and means of his development, and through him, ultimately, a stimulus and development for the entire Hebrew race.

All this was one of the most important means of his attaining the greatest work of his life, both for Egypt and for Palestine. "Trained men and godly men. Tested men and spiritual men. Who knows any such out of a job? Railroads are crying for them. Banks are hunting for them. Factories are advertising for them. Stores are waiting for them. Colleges are trying for them. Churches are praying for them. And all the world stands shouting, 'Come!' Are you in training?"

His Victory over Temptation was another means, of the greatest importance, to accomplishing his life work, and success. Joseph had become familiar with the house and its inmates. "We may believe it was no ordinary temptation when day after day the mistress of the house, 'expert in amorous arts,' came to spread the net, with every allurements which her skill and her passion could devise." But Joseph refused every attempt to entrap him, even at the expense of being thrown for several years into an Egyptian prison.

"Joseph's fight for social purity is one of the best known of 'the decisive battles of the world.'" — *Clifford*. "In the Dresden gallery there is a picture of the temptation of Joseph, by one of the great masters, and it is worth crossing the ocean to see the expression of horror in his eyes, and the lifting of his hands, as he turns away from the voluptuary who would seal their mutual ruin." — *Wharton*.



White Castle in which Joseph was confined at Memphis.
From the Famous Mosaic Pavement.

II. JOSEPH IN PRISON. BECOMES AN INTERPRETER OF DREAMS.

39 : 21-23 ; 40 : 1-23. Even in the prison "the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison. The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper."

The Rewards of Fidelity. "Fidelity is seven-tenths of business success." — *James Parlon*. "Joseph succeeded as a ruler because he had succeeded as a captive and slave. Had he failed in the prison-house he would have failed equally in the

Pharaoh's palace. It was because he knew how to use his opportunity that when the opportunity came he could take advantage of it." — *Sayce*.

THE DREAMS OF TWO OF PHARAOH'S OFFICERS. Both had in some way offended the king.

The Butler's Dream, vs. 9-13. In his dream the chief butler found himself ministering to Pharaoh as usual. The three branches of the grapevine which the butler saw, Joseph interpreted as three days, after which the butler was to be restored to freedom and to his customary employment. The whole action of the drama pointed to a favorable interpretation.

The Baker's Dream, vs. 16-19. Doubtless expecting a similarly happy interpretation, the chief baker related his dream. But the three baskets on his head, and the birds eating the baked meats out of the baskets instead of Pharaoh, pointed to the interpretation, "Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee."

On Pharaoh's birthday, soon after, Joseph's interpretations of the dreams were fulfilled.

Joseph pleaded with the butler to ask Pharaoh to release him from prison, telling him of his own sad story. But the butler, in his joy over his restoration, forgot all about it.

Light from the Cloud. "The ingratitude of the butler, inexcusable as it was, left Joseph in the prison [for two more years] until the moment when he would be needed for a work of stupendous importance. While God's purposes were slowly ripening in the world outside, Joseph's character also was ripening into strength and self-discipline within the dungeon walls." — *J. R. Miller*.

"O weary ones! ye may not see
Your helpers in their downward flight;
Nor hear the sound of silver wings
Slow beating through the hush of night!

"There are, who, like the seer of old
Can see the helpers God has sent,
And how life's rugged mountain-side
Is white with many an angel tent."

— *Whittier*.

Illustration. "As Joseph served under distressing circumstances, so we may find a modern parallel in the incident related by Dr. Heber Jones, a few months ago in the city of Toronto. A Korean preacher in the city of Seoul had been cast into prison without trial for an offence which his own son had committed. He found himself cast into a cell with eighteen criminals, and for five long months was confined there without a chance to speak a word in his defence. When he was finally released, as guiltless of the charge, the eighteen criminals, through the words and witness of the Korean preacher, had become Christians. Some of them, since their release, have become preachers to their heathen fellows. This from personal experience of Dr. Jones was given as an example of the type of the Korean servant of God." — *Mrs. H. J. Keith, Peterborough, Ont.*

III. JOSEPH'S OPPORTUNITY HAS COME. HE INTERPRETS THE DREAM OF THE PHARAOH OF EGYPT, 41: 1-32. For two years more Joseph remained in prison, and was as faithful there as if he were in business for himself. He was what is usually called a "self-made man"; "that is, he was not made by circumstances, or by other men. He became great in spite of circumstances and other men. But all through his life there is a marked divine element, which he himself could not control." — *Dods*.

It was thirteen years now since Joseph was sold into Egypt. He was thirty years old, in the full maturity of his life, when his great opportunity came for which all his previous life had been preparing him.

Illustration. Bunyan in his prison could not understand why God should thus allow him to be shut out from his work for the best twelve years of his life, his soul longing to preach the gospel, and thousands waiting to hear him. He could not then see, what now is plain, that by the *Pilgrim's Progress* he there wrote, he has been preaching to millions instead of thousands, and for centuries instead of years.

Pharaoh's Dreams. That ordinary dreams have in our day, and had in those days, no special significance, is undoubted. But "the time in which Joseph lived was the childhood of the world, when God had neither spoken much to men, nor could speak much, because as yet they had not learned his language, but were only being slowly taught it by signs suited to their capacity. If these men were to receive any knowledge beyond what their own unaided efforts could attain, they must be taught in a language they understood." — *Dods*.

Coleridge professes to have composed his poem, "Kubla Khan," in a dream. He

33. Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34. Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years.

35. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

36. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.

had taken an anodyne prescribed for a slight indisposition and fell asleep in his chair while reading in Purchas's *Pilgrimage* of a palace built by Kubla Khan. He continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, and awoke with a vivid impression that he had composed from two to three hundred lines of verse. He at once wrote the fragment as it is now preserved. At this point he was called away, and on his return, an hour later, the rest of the poem had vanished from his memory.

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree;
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man,
Down to a sunless sea."

The First Dream. "Pharaoh dreamed: and behold he stood by the river Nile. And behold there came up out of the river seven kine cows well-favored and fat-fleshed; and they fed in the reed-grass. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favored and lean-fleshed, and they . . . did eat up the seven well-favored and fat kine.

"So Pharaoh awoke."

The Second Dream. "And he slept a second time: and, behold, seven ears of grain came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven ears, thin and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them. And the thin ears swallowed up the seven rank and full ears.

"And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream."

The Wise Men of Egypt utterly failed to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, when he told them. All of them failed.

Then the chief butler recalled his promise to Joseph; and told the story of his dream and that of the chief baker, and how Joseph interpreted each of the dreams exactly according to the results that followed some days later, as Pharaoh knew.

Pharaoh immediately summoned Joseph. He was hastily taken out of the dungeon, and when he had shaved himself and changed his raiment, as a young prince should do, aided by the officers, he was brought before Pharaoh.

Pharaoh, to Joseph: "I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it" (Am. R.).

Joseph, to Pharaoh: "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

Joseph was called to do nothing less than that he should interpret a dream which all Pharaoh's wise men had failed to explain. That, however, is always the path to the highest success — to do something that no one else can do.

Pharaoh, to Joseph: repeats the story of his dreams, as we have read them.

Joseph, to Pharaoh: "The dream . . . is one." Both dreams tell the same facts. "God hath showed to Pharaoh what he is about to do."

The Interpretation. Both dreams are one, foretelling the same thing. The seven good kine, and the seven good ears of corn, represent seven years of great plenty.

"The seven thin and ill-favored kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine. . . . And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."

Such famines as Joseph foretold were by no means unknown in Egypt. "In July, 1908, Brugsch Bey discovered inscriptions which tell how 'for seven successive

37. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

38. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find *such a one* as this *is*, a man in whom the Spirit of God *is*?

39. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, *there is none* so discreet and wise as thou *art* :

40. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

41. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

42. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck :

years the Nile did not overflow, and vegetation withered and failed ; that the land was devoid of crops, and that during these years famine and misery devastated the land of Egypt."— *Companion Bible*. "Twice only, in the eleventh and in the twelfth centuries of the Christian era, such a catastrophe is described by Arabian historians in terms which give us a full conception of the calamity from which Joseph delivered the country. The first lasted, like that of Joseph, for seven years ; of the other the most fearful details are given by an eye-witness. 'The famine began. . . . Large numbers emigrated. . . . The poor ate carrion, corpses, and dogs. . . . They went further, devouring even little children. The eating of human flesh became so common as to excite no surprise. . . . A traveler often passed through a large village without seeing a single living inhabitant. . . . In one village we saw the dwellers of each house extended dead, the husband, the wife, and the children. . . . The road between Egypt and Syria was like a vast field sown with human bodies, or rather like a plain which has just been swept by the scythe of the mower. It had become as a banquet-hall for the birds, wild beasts, and dogs, which gorged on their flesh.'"— *Stanley*. It was from such horrors that Joseph saved Egypt and Canaan.

SCENE IV. JOSEPH SUGGESTS A PLAN TO SAVE THE EGYPTIANS FROM FAMINE. 41 : 33-36. He proposed to Pharaoh to select a man discreet and wise and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint overseers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of these good years that come, and lay up grain under the hand of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. And the food shall be for a store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt : that the land perish not through the famine (Am. R.).

SCENE V. JOSEPH MADE RULER OF EGYPT, 41 : 37-45. PHARAOH WISELY CHOSE JOSEPH HIMSELF, and appointed him to carry out the plan. He made him the grand vizier of Egypt with full authority.

The Insignia of Office. 42. Pharaoh took off his ring. This was, no doubt, a principal circumstance in Joseph's investiture in the high office of chief minister to the king of Egypt. The ring was undoubtedly a signet, or seal-ring, which gave validity to the documents to which it was affixed, and by the delivery of which, therefore, Pharaoh delegated to Joseph the chief authority in the state. "People in the East do not sign their names. They have seals in which their names and titles are engraven, and with which they make an impression with thick ink, on all occasions for which we use the signature. To give a man your seal is, therefore, to give him the use of that authority and power which your own signature possesses."— *Pictorial Bible*.

Vestures of fine linen. Joseph was next "arrayed in vestures of fine linen," "which was not only a high distinction, as coming from the king — thereby constituting it a dress of honor, still conferred as a mark of high favor by the sovereigns of the East, — but denoted the rank and station to which he was exalted, as it appears that dresses of this fine fabric were only allowed to be worn by persons of the highest rank and distinction in Egypt."— *Kitto*.



Signets or Seal-rings.

43. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him *ruler* over all the land of Egypt.

44. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I *am* Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.

43. **Made him to ride in the second chariot.** Thus arrayed, Joseph is placed in Pharaoh's second chariot (next to Pharaoh's), and in the midst of a splendid procession conducted through the city of Heliopolis.

And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah (of uncertain meaning). And he gave him to wife Asenath. An Egyptian word, signifying the "Favorite of Neith," the Egyptian Minerva. Daughter of Potipherah ("Belonging to Rah," i.e. the sun), priest of On, or Heliopolis, i.e. city of the sun. The two obelisks called Cleopatra's needles, one of which is now in London, and the other in New York, came originally from this city. "I believe the king did this on purpose to have one of his men connected with the most ancient and venerated college of priests, who must have been very powerful at that time when we see Joseph respecting all their privileges, while he taxed so heavily all the rest of the country." — *M. Naville*.

SCENE VI. JOSEPH CARRIES OUT HIS PLANS. 41:46-57. **THE SEVEN YEARS OF PLENTY.** 48. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years. According to Joseph's advice that Pharaoh gather up a fifth part (v. 34). This was the government tax, or was bought up at low prices such as would prevail amid such abundance. Doubtless the people also stored up grain for themselves, but according to their faith, which was much less than Joseph's. This continued during the seven years of plenty.

The Cause of the Years of Plenty. Egypt's fertility is due to the floods of the Nile, which irrigate the dry territory over which they spread, and at the same time cover the ground with a layer of rich loam brought down from the mountains above. During these seven years "the rains in Abyssinia were abundant, the Nile rose to an unwonted height, the deposits of the water were perhaps unusually rich and spread over an unusually large area, and the people sowed large quantities of grain, and reaped very abundant harvests." — *Thornley Smith*. An immense supply was thus laid up in the storehouses throughout Egypt, so much that (v. 49) the officer in charge ceased to keep a reckoning of it.

THE SEVEN YEARS OF FAMINE AND THE CAUSE. The seven years of famine in Egypt must have been caused by the absence of the usual overflow of the Nile. Sir Samuel Baker, the distinguished explorer of Africa, suggests as a possible cause of the famine in Egypt the damming up by enemies of the Athbara River, the first large branch of the Nile, and flowing from Abyssinia. "The Athbara River is the stream that has actually formed the Delta by the rich deposit of its soil brought down from the fertile plains of Abyssinia. Without the Athbara River Egypt would obtain only a scant supply of water, and would be certainly deprived of the fertilizing element of the annual inundation." "I have always believed, since I carefully examined the river system of the Nile tributaries, that the seven years of famine in Lower Egypt in the time of Joseph were occasioned by the stoppage of the Athbara River; also the Rahat and Dinder, affluents of the Blue Nile. The Ethiopians were continually at war with the Egyptians, and they possessed the control of the Nile by damming and deflecting the waters of those affluents." "I can positively state that the plan is feasible, and that should any European be in command at the rebellious center of the Soudan, his first strategical operation would be to deprive Egypt of the water necessary for her existence." — *Sir Samuel Baker, in Tomkins' Life and Times of Joseph*.

A succession of low Niles is no unheard-of event in Egyptian history. In the eleventh century (A.D. 1064-1071) there was a famine which lasted, like that of Joseph, for seven years, caused by a deficient Nile. A hieroglyphic inscription engraved in the age of the Ptolemies on a rock near the First Cataract similarly tells us of another famine that was wasting the country because 'the Nile flood had not come for seven years.' In the Middle Ages, indeed, famines took place of such terrible severity that women even ate their own children for food." — *Sayce*.

"But there is a record of one famine which many, among them Brugsch, have identified with the time of Joseph. In a tomb at El-Kab, an inscription of the governor, named Baba, states that he, in the great famine which came upon his

people, dealt out to them grain which he had stored away in times of plenty." — *Prof. Ira M. Price, in The Monuments and the Old Testament.*

The Steps of Joseph's Advancement are very clear, and may be followed by any young man desirous of "getting along in the world." (1) He was not discouraged and downcast by adverse circumstances. (2) He did his best wherever he was. (3) He made friends by his readiness to help. (4) He trusted God, and was always ready to acknowledge him. (5) He was modest, and waited for others to suggest his advancement. (6) He was patient, and waited God's good time. (7) He made use of the little opportunities, and so was all ready for the great ones when they arrived.

Illustration. Seven Fears Changed to Seven Joys. In *The Light of Asia*, the king dreamed troublous dreams about his son, Prince Siddartha, and seven great and terrible fears came before him in vision. The flag of Indra was rent by a rushing wind; ten huge elephants shook the earth with their tread; a mighty drum pealed like a thunderstorm; his son sat on a tower scattering gems, as if it rained jacinths and rubies, and all the world seized on these treasures. Every one was to the king a great fear. But a wise counsellor showed him that every one of his fears was in reality a great joy. The rent flag was but the beginning of the new. The ten elephants were the ten great gifts of wisdom; the tower was the growing of the new religion, and the gems were the truths his son would give to the world; and the drum was the thunder of the preached word.

Illustration. The Tapestry Weavers. The wonderful pictures on the tapestries that have adorned the walls of palaces have been woven by hand on simple looms from woolen threads. As I stood before one of the most famous of the Aubusson tapestries, I asked the attendant to show me the other side. It was a tangle of threads and thrums and ends, a confused mystery of colors, without order, or meaning, or beauty, and resembling the picture on the other side as little as the tuning of an organ resembles the oratorio of the Messiah. And yet the artist stands behind his web, on this reverse side, while he is making the picture. The pattern is before him. The materials are by his side. He weaves them in according to the pattern, but without seeing the charming picture that is coming into being. So Joseph was now weaving his life on the reverse side. He could not see its meaning. He saw the confused jumble of life's threads. He worked in the threads God bade him; he followed the pattern set him; and at length God showed him the right side, the true picture his life was making, full of blessing and glory.

There are mysteries in every life of which we do not know the meaning. Christ says to us as he said to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." No one ever yet at the beginning of life knew the full meaning and possibilities of his life. But at length God will show us the right side of the picture, which our life has been weaving, so beautiful, of such exquisite glory and blessedness, that I sometimes think the first thing we will do when we reach heaven, will be to go straight to the Lord, and bowing at his feet cry out, "Lord, forgive all our murmurings at our lot, and take our inmost thanks for the way in which thou didst lead us, and the plan of life thou didst prepare for us."

"And wherever a tear had fallen down
Gleamed out a diamond rare,
And jewels befitting a monarch's crown
Were the footprints left by care."

— *The Tapestry Weaver, in Peloubet's Loom of Life.*

LESSON XI. — December 15.

JOSEPH FORGIVES HIS BROTHERS. — Genesis 45: 1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.* — MATTHEW 6: 14.

Devotional Reading: Gen. 44: 18-34.

Additional Material for Teachers: Gen. 42: 1-44: 34; Eph. 4: 31, 32.

Intermediate, Senior and Adult Topic: The Strength and Beauty of Forgiveness.

Additional Material: Matt. 6: 12-15; 18: 21-35; Luke 17: 3, 4; Col. 3: 12-15.

Intermediate Memory Verses: Eph. 4: 31, 32.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The maps are essential to obtaining a realizing and impressive understanding of this story ; and to tracing the repeated journey from Hebron in Palestine to Zoan on the Nile (or to Heliopolis, if Joseph was making his headquarters there).

The two maps at the beginning of this volume can both be used.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time.—The second year of the famine, B.C. 1715 or 1714 (according to Beecher's chronology), when the ten brothers of Joseph came to Egypt for food.

Place.—They came from Hebron, about 250 miles to Zoan the capital of Egypt, on one of the branches of the Nile emptying into the Mediterranean.

It is possible that Joseph had his home in Heliopolis (On), several miles east of the Nile.

Joseph was about 39 years old. He was 30 years old when he became the second ruler of Egypt, next to Pharaoh. He was 37 years old when the famine began, and it had been raging two years.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why were the ten sons of Jacob sent to Egypt?
What kind of a reception did Joseph give his brothers?
What was his purpose in this?
In how many ways did Joseph test the quality and change in his brothers?
Had he good reason to believe in them?
The story of Joseph making himself known to them.
On what conditions does God forgive us?
How did Jacob's seeing Joseph's wagons assure him that Joseph was safe and ruler of Egypt?
What in God's providence made it wise for the whole family and clan to go to Egypt and live there?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Ways of God in Developing Character. Introduction.

- I. THE TESTING OF JOSEPH IN EGYPT, 22 years, Gen. 39-41.
- II. THE TESTING OF JACOB'S TEN SONS, 22 years, Gen. 39-45.
Chiefly in Palestine.
- III. JOSEPH TESTING HIS BROTHERS, Gen. 42-45.
- IV. FORGIVENESS, HUMAN AND DIVINE.
- V. JACOB AND HIS WHOLE CLAN GO DOWN TO EGYPT, Gen. 46.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The *Commentaries*, and volumes on Joseph, as in previous lessons. Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney's *The Open Mystery*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Whittier's *Poems*, "Forgiveness."
Amos R. Wells' *Everyday Poems*, "Of all things far I love the best."
The Loom of Life, by F. N. Peloubet (C. E. Soc.). Fanny Crosby's "The meeting of Jacob and Joseph."

THE LESSON IN ART.

The Cup in Benjamin's Sack, Guerchino.*

Joseph Selling Corn, Barth.*

Joseph Making Himself Known to his Brethren, Doré,* Ghiberti, Memling.

Prayer of Jacob, Doré.*

Jacob Going to Egypt, Doré,* Schopin.*

Joseph Presents his Father to Pharaoh, Pontorno.*

Jacob Blessing Joseph, Van Meire.

INTRODUCTION. Before entering upon the details of our lesson, it will be an advantage to our scholars to see clearly where we are going, and to have a vision of God's providential guidance in this earliest stage of the Hebrew nation. The twelve tribes begin with the sons of Jacob of whom we have been studying, and whose names are given to the tribes and remained thus for ages (except that Levi and Joseph had no tribal residence, and Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, took their places).

Palestine was the Promised Land of the Israelites, and was to be their own country through the ages. But it was not safe for the small clan of Jacob to remain there for the time being because they were in the midst of the vilest heathenism, surrounded on all sides by the fascinations and heathen immorality of the Canaanites. The best thing that could come to them was to be sent down to Egypt which was at that time the most advanced and cultured nation in the world ; and at the same time the Israelites, being shepherds, did not come in such contact with the Egyptians as to be tempted away from God. Here was God's school for his untrained people. Here they were interned for many years.

To lead his people to this sheltered region for a time, for their training, God by his providence guided and trained and tested for 22 years in different ways. Joseph in Egypt, and Jacob's ten elder sons in Palestine.

I. THE TESTING OF JOSEPH. Brought up in pastoral luxury, personally beautiful and attractive, sagacious, able and upright, it was natural that he should inspire confidence, and the confidence reposed in him should be justified.

He became a man of great natural parts. He could endure patiently, and he kept to his principles steadfastly. Instinct with energy, of inflexible will, not without deep affection, ready to forgive, he is, still, greatest in his fidelity to the God of his fathers. Pure in morals, a confessor of the true faith in the midst of idolaters, and a believer in the promises when their fulfilment was centuries distant. — *Condensed from Geikie.*

The Testing. Joseph had his full share of reverses, severe and undeserved; resisting temptations even at the cost of a dungeon.

Every one of his troubles was the means of his reaching the height of his success and usefulness. They were steps upward.

(1) *He was sold as a slave.* But that brought him to Egypt, his sphere of work. And it enabled him to do good to his master in the name of the true God.

(2) *He resisted great temptations.* He was victorious over them at the cost of being flung into a dungeon. But the dungeon was the means of his next step upward.

(3) In the same prison Joseph met two of Pharaoh's officers and interpreted their dreams. He hoped that now he could be released, but in vain. *The butler forgot all about him!*

(4) For two years longer he remained in prison; which was fortunate for Joseph; for if he had been released, he might have been a long way off when the exact time came to reveal to Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams.

(5) The interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams led to his becoming the ruler of Egypt.

(6) His becoming ruler saved the lives of the Egyptians, and of his father Jacob's family.

And (7) by this means the whole clan of Jacob was brought to Egypt.

Illustration. In a Tunnel. "In the meeting yesterday I was filled with joy, and I thought I would never be dark again; and now it is all gone, and I am in the depths. What is the matter with me?"

"Did you ever pass through a railroad tunnel?"

"Certainly I have," said the young Christian, "but I do not see what that has to do with it."

"When you were in the tunnel did you think the sun had been blotted out of the sky?"

"No, of course I did not, I knew the sun was in the sky the same as ever, although I could not see it just then. But what has that to do with my experience?"

"Were you much depressed when going through the dark tunnel?"

"No; I knew I would soon be out into the light."

"And did you get out?"

"I am out now!" he said joyfully, "I see what you mean. Divine facts are just the same, no matter how I feel, and I am to rejoice in the facts, not in my feelings. I see! I see!" — *The Christian.*

Illustration. Archbishop Whately illustrates by the "Fable of the Kite":

"Once on a time a paper kite
Was mounted to a wondrous height," etc.

How necessary it is that in the progress of a man or a nation, there should be a certain amount of opposition. The kite cannot soar to the heights without a string. Cut the string and it falls. See *Whately's Annotations*, p. 207, for examples.

"Thus with something of the seer,
Must the moral pioneer
From the future borrow;
Clothe the waste with dreams of grain,
And on the midnight sky of rain,
Paint the golden morrow." — *Whittier.*

F. W. Robertson well says: "Shortly after his imprisonment, Joseph was released, his merit acknowledged, and almost regal dignity conferred upon him. Whereupon we say, 'Now all is right, merit has its reward; and with this poetical justice we are satisfied.' But this is not the justice of God's world. Are *these*, then, the rewards of well-doing, — horses and carriages, the royal robe, and the knee bowed before him? Is it with these things, quite earthly, that the Everlasting rewards celestial qualities? Neither in this world nor in the world to come are these the rewards of goodness."

THEN Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him ; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

2. And he wept aloud : and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

His success consisted in large measure in his worthy character and fitness to serve God and man.

"Rich in experience angels might covet,
Rich in a faith that has grown with the years."

II. THE TESTING OF JACOB'S TEN OLDER SONS. The ten sons of Jacob for 22 years had to bear the consciousness of having done a great wrong to Joseph and to their father. They dared not tell their father what had become of Joseph. They lied to him ; and dared not retract the falsehood ; nor could they tell him of their anger and envy and intended murder, and final slavery of Joseph, for all those long years.

Like Lady Macbeth's cry, — " All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand " — which had murdered Duncan, —
each one could repeat, —

"I sat alone with my conscience
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased.
The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,

"And things that I thought were dead things
Were alive with a terrible mead.
The vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face,
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that silently solemn place."

— *Dean Stubbs, Bishop of Ely.*

Shakespeare has more than once represented the despair of the soul under the law of nature :

"O my offence is rank, it smells to heaven !
It hath the primal, elder curse upon it,
A brother's murder."

There was no full relief till after 22 years they received the forgiveness of Joseph and of God.

In a recent article on criminals, the author warns the young against committing crime, — " It is curious that a man never realizes the risk he is running until he has committed a crime. Then the sense of it overwhelms him if he is a novice."

Now the real question is what the effect of living with their father in the depth of affliction for almost a quarter of a century would be.

Was there any " Wonderful Land of Beginning Again ? "

There must have gradually come a new feeling and tender desire to comfort and soothe their father, to show a new spirit of helpfulness. They could not see his grief and mourning without repenting of the past. While deeply feeling the pangs of remorse,

"in their bosoms strove
Repentance and reviving love."

Contrasting themselves with their ancestor Abraham, and their grandfather Isaac, and their father's repentance of his deceit, and the blessed vision-dream of the golden stairway to heaven and God, and the change of heart he gained then and there, they must have felt hope for themselves.

The change in these brothers was proved by what they did when they were tested by Joseph, and were gladly received by him, and forgiven.

III. JOSEPH TESTING HIS TEN BROTHERS. Gen. 42-45. The famine extended at least as far as Palestine. Near the end of the two years it was so severe that there was danger of starvation. But hearing that there was plenty of grain in Egypt Jacob proposed to his ten sons to go down to Egypt and buy supplies.

Now Joseph had not seen nor heard from his brethren for nearly 22 years ; and when they came to him it was necessary to test them in various ways before he could decide how it was wise to treat them.

The brothers did not, could not, recognize Joseph in the ruler of Egypt.

They spoke Hebrew. So could Joseph if he wished, but he probably at first spoke through an interpreter, but could overhear his brothers' conversation.

They wore the shepherds' dress. Joseph lived in a palace in princely attire ; and " the brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the earth.

3. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I *am* Joseph: doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I *am* Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5. Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life.

Could the ruler of Egypt help a grim smile as he thought of his dreams of the sheaves coming round about and doing obeisance to his sheaf? — *Blaikie*.

First Test, 42 : 3-28. "As suspicious strangers the brothers are brought before the viceroy." His first word to them was "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the

land ye are come"; not its poverty, but its open and defenceless spots. A charge that travellers in the East often encounter.

"The eastern frontier of Egypt was fortified and closely watched, and a band of ten men seeking to cross it excited suspicion." — *Int. Crit. Com.* The brothers denied it and revealed to Joseph that his own beloved brother was living. He again roughly accused them of being spies, and demanded that they bring Benjamin down to prove that they were speaking the truth. He put them all in prison.

He may have had his own imprisonment in mind, and have wished them to understand through some experience what sorrow they had brought upon him. Moreover, their imprisonment "served the double purpose of detaining them until he should have made up his mind as to the best means of dealing with them, and of securing their retention under his eye until some display of character might sufficiently certify him of their state of mind." — *Dods*.

The Second Test was when Joseph heard the brothers talking together of the time 22 years before, when they sold Joseph into slavery: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear?" (Gen. 42 : 21, 22).

Joseph spoke through an interpreter, in the same room with the brothers, but they did not imagine that he knew Hebrew. So that what he heard, he knew expressed their long-concealed feelings. He himself wept over them.

The Third Test was the placing of the money brought by them to pay for the grain bought, in each man's sack. If they kept the money they would prove to be dishonest. But they returned it with the money for the next loads of grain. "Behold,



Joseph Testing His Brothers.

From an old print.

6. For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and yet *there* are five years, in the which *there shall* neither be earing nor harvest.

7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8. So now, *it was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9. Haste ye, and go up to my father and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not;

the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold?" (44: 8).

The Fourth Test, 43, 44. Again the brothers arrive in Egypt, with Benjamin. A dinner party was arranged for them in Joseph's house. "A new terror falls upon them; never were consciences so uneasy. They think they are called into Joseph's presence on account of the money in their sacks. Joseph was not quite satisfied. He deemed it best, therefore, to subject their filial and their brotherly affection to a further test." — *Blaikie*.

When the eleven brothers were about to leave for home, Joseph had their sacks filled with food, and in the sacks every man's money was placed, and in addition Joseph's silver cup was placed in Benjamin's sack. They left for home early in the morning. But they had not gone far when the steward charged them with stealing Joseph's cup, returning evil for good. The brothers denied the accusation. They were so certain of their innocence, that they said "with whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondsmen."

But it was found in Benjamin's sack, to the consternation of all.

"The stratagem was successful, for the true character of the men came out. Their consciences were troubled, as they had been for many years."



Joseph Making Himself Known to His Brothers.

Few more noble or more beautiful scenes have ever been enacted in the world's history than that which followed.

Let the teacher, or the best reader in the class, read the plea of Judah, vs. 18-31.

"Then Judah came near unto him and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.

"My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

"And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said to my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

"And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

"And our father said, Go again and buy us a little food.

"And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.

"And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: and if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

10. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast :

11. And there will I nourish thee ; for yet *there are* five years of famine ; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that *it is* my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen ; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept ; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15. Moreover, he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them : and after that his brethren talked with him.

"Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us, seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave."

Joseph is now more than satisfied. He could not refrain himself from weeping. All were reconciled and forgiven. There was joy among the angels as they joy over one sinner that repenteth, and there was great joy on earth at the change of heart in these men.

IV. FORGIVENESS. *God's Forgiveness.* The ten men who had done wrong were first forgiven by God himself, because he knew that they were penitent, and hated their sin with all their hearts.

"As far as the East is from the West so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." — See Ps. 103 : 8-18.

"Of all things far I love the best
The distance from the East to West,
For by that space and all within
God's mercy parts me from my sin." — *Amos R. Wells.*

The one condition of receiving the offered forgiveness is a new heart and a new life. The business of forgiveness is to save us from our sins, and it is successful only when this end is reached.

God's indignation, and the necessary punishments, are always with the desire and purpose of saving men, and the world. He overcomes evil with good, but it is not good to let men go on growing worse themselves and injuring others, without putting every possible obstacle in their way, to make the way of transgressors so hard that they will repent and turn from their evil ways ; at the same time using every influence that love and wisdom can apply, a perpetual outshining of the readiness to forgive.

Man's Forgiveness. "Avenge not yourselves, beloved. . . . But if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him to drink : for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good " (Rom. 12 : 19-21). "Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me " (Prov. 24 : 29).

The forgiving spirit seeks to do all the good possible to the one who has wronged us. It yearns to help him and to save him from his sin. It proves this feeling of forgiveness and love by doing good, as God sends the rain and the sunshine on the evil and on the good ; as Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and did everything possible to save the city from its fate, even when it was about to crucify him. So twice repeated is the command, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him," etc. (Prov. 25 : 21, 22 ; Rom. 12 : 20, 21).

"Learn from yon Orient shell to love thy foe,
And strew with pearls the hand that brings thee woe ;
Free, like yon rock, from base, vindictive pride,
Emblaze with gems the wrist that rends thy side."

Probably few if any people have ever lived without the consciousness of the need of forgiveness. There have been so many errors, and mistakes and sins, so many duties omitted, so many opportunities neglected, so many imperfections that there is no hope for us save in the cleansing blood of Christ, blotting out our sins.

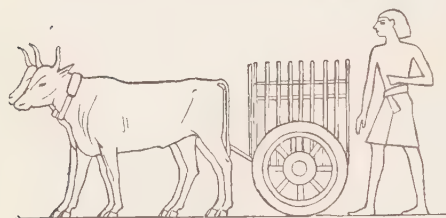
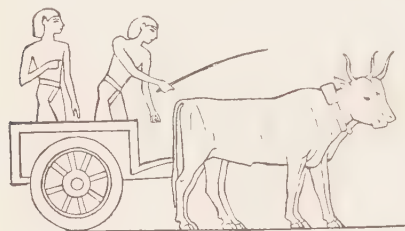
Even then the thought troubles us, How can forgiveness take away the fact of the sin ? No matter what is done for us, nor how lovingly we are welcomed to our

Father's love, the fact of the sin remains. Peter denied his Lord ; forgiveness and restoration did not blot out the fact, nor even the record of the fact known and read of all men. David was cleansed from his sin, and God blotted out transgressions, and he was washed "whiter than snow," but the fact and the record are ever connected with his name.

That charming book, *The Stars and the Earth* (now possibly out of print), shows us how every deed is sending its picture out into the universe, and there is always some place where a sufficiently powerful eye can see the deed actually taking place. There is some star now that the rays from the story of Joseph and his brethren, nearly 4000 years ago, have just reached, and a keen enough eye could actually see every event actually being transacted before them.

Shakespeare's *Richard III*, in his last dream seemed to see one after another of those he had wronged passing before him and saying, Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-night.

V. THE JACOB CLAN COMES TO EGYPT BY DESIRE OF JOSEPH. WITH A WELCOME FROM PHARAOH, Gen. 46. Having made himself known to his brothers, Joseph told them to hasten back home to Hebron, and tell his father of all his glory, and bring him down without delay to see it. This glory would comfort the



Egyptian Carts.

father, and assure him of the safety of going into this foreign country. Pharaoh joins in the invitation, and sends abundant means for their transportation. When they reached home the news was too good for Jacob to believe, and "his heart fainted"; but when he saw the Egyptian wagons, then he was convinced, and his spirits revived.

The Egyptian wagons for carrying produce, as pictured on the monuments, were rather carts, having only two wheels. Such vehicles were used in Egypt where the country was level, but were probably then unknown in Palestine, which was rough and hilly.

Jacob's Wagons is an excellent illustration of the convincing proofs of Christianity. The religion of Jesus is not a mere theory; it is proved abundantly by facts. We would convince men of its truth by what it has done.

The lives that have been made better, the fact that it does change for good all those who receive it into their hearts, that wherever it enters a community or a nation it elevates them, — these are facts, like Jacob's wagons, that should convince men.

LESSON XII. — December 22.

A CHRISTMAS LESSON: THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Luke 2:8-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* — LUKE 2:11.

The Birth of Jesus, which we celebrate to-day, is the central point of the world's history.

He was born in the reign of Augustus Caesar, the first Roman Emperor ; at Bethlehem of Judah, where his great ancestor, David, was born a thousand years before.

Who was Jesus? Who is He?

The Answer. John tells us that Jesus from the beginning was *The Eternal Word of God*, that is, the means by which He could make Himself known to men.

The divine nature of Christ is not a mere theory, far away from human life, but is a fact essential to one who would reveal God to men and be the Saviour of men. He speaks to us from personal knowledge of God, of His love, His care, His readiness to forgive, His nearness to men, His fatherhood. He tells us about heaven and immortal life from his own experience. He himself says to us, "We speak that we do know, and testify (Am. R., "bear witness of") that we have seen." John 3:11.

But we could not see Jesus the Son of God unless he became man. We cannot see a spirit. Therefore he was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth . . . and we beheld his glory.

This same Jesus is with us now ; Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world.

I wish on this Christmas Sunday to make the presence of Jesus as real as the men and women we see around us. He is no dream, no mere vision, no fiction of the imagination, no faraway ideal, but a fact, an ever-present Saviour and King and Friend, as real as the babe of Bethlehem, as real as he was to the apostles, and to the early Christians.

And we can make it real by means of *what Jesus is actually doing to-day, in the town or city where you live, and in the country to which you belong.*

Jesus told his disciples: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." And his promise has been fulfilled all down the ages, and never so abundantly as to-day.

Look at your city with all its slums and poverty and manifold evils. There is but one power in the world that can destroy them, and is working to transform them into a garden of the Lord. The doing of this, and the wonderful uplifting of the heathen nations all over the world, is proof that Jesus is living and working now. He is alive to-day and working for the salvation of the world.

"The churches of America made the nineteenth century one of the greatest hundred years of history which the world has seen since Jesus Christ taught in Galilee. . . . Let any man who has eyes to see go back to the hour when the eighteenth century went out and the nineteenth came in, and contrast the conditions which then prevailed with the march of progress which greatened every day of the hundred years. Is it nothing that the American churches had no foreign missionary societies then and that now they have their heralds of the gospel in every part of the world? Is it nothing that they have kept pace with the procession of civilization and settlement which has marched across the land and that they have built Christian colleges in every section and established churches in every community? Is it nothing that they have furnished the rank and file and leaders and commanders of almost every army which has fought a battle in the general moral conflict or in the struggle for a better town or neighborhood? . . . When the government made its last report they were building a new house of worship every hour of an eight hour working day. That is something. They are teaching more than fifteen millions of boys and girls in their Sunday-schools every week, entirely on the voluntary plan."

There never was a time when more was being done in a thousand ways toward the



Pilgrims going to Bethlehem.

8. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

coming of the kingdom of heaven. And Jesus with the Holy Spirit is doing it by means of his disciples. It is this fact that makes us realize that Jesus is now among us, and that makes us rejoice that he was born on Christmas Day.

HOW THE WORLD WAS PREPARED FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST. In no other period of the world's history before or since have so many things combined to make the coming of Christ effective for the redemption of mankind, as at the period of his birth. This was another most marvellous providence of God.

First. The best place in the known world for Jesus to be born was Palestine, from its situation.

Second. The Roman Empire included nearly the whole civilized world.

Third. The Greek language was spoken and read by almost all who could read at all, throughout the empire. It was the literary language.

Fourth. It was a period of almost universal peace under Augustus Caesar. The temple of Janus was shut. It was closed only three times in 700 years.

Fifth. The Jews with their Bible (Old Testament) had been scattered throughout the empire. It is interesting to note that the greatest calamity that ever befell the Jewish nation, their exile to Babylonia, was transformed by the providence of God into one of the greatest means for the spread of the Gospel over the world.

Sixth. There was a wide-spread intellectual and moral awakening extending through the empire. Some of the greatest writers in the world lived at this time. Culture was becoming universal. Schools were multiplying. The diffusion of books was wide-spread. So that the New Testament was written in Greek, the

most perfect language known.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS, v. 7.

The Time. The exact time of the year is uncertain; but our usual date, December 25, is sufficiently near for all ordinary purposes.

The Place, was Bethlehem, the boyhood's home of his great ancestor David. The father and mother came from Nazareth in Galilee, summoned to Bethlehem by the government. When they arrived at Bethlehem, there was **no room for them in the inn.** When the child was born he was laid in the manger of the stable attached to the inn. *The Geographical Magazine*, March, 1914, thinks that it was the stable of a house, and not of the inn, to which Mary and Joseph were invited. Stables were often a part of the village houses.

Illustration. "The most famous picture of Correggio is *La Nolle*, in the Dresden Gallery. The light from the divine Child as he lies on the straw in the manger



Interior of a Peasant's Home, with its Manger, near Bethlehem.

The raised dais is used by the family. The steps over the arch lead to a store-place for grain, etc.

irradiates the happy, smiling features of the Virgin, and dazzles the astonished gaze of the humble shepherdess, who is bringing in a pair of turtle-doves."

The birth of the Babe at Bethlehem is the cardinal fact in the chronology of this world. We establish all dates in history by comparison with Christ's birth as a standard. There is nothing else like it. Before it was a night lit by the stars and moon in the heavens. That era was the dayspring from on high, the dawn of the rising sun, in morals, happiness, intellect, and all the blessings that can come to man.

10. And the angel said unto them, Fear not : for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12. And this *shall be* a sign unto you ; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Have all the class learn by heart Phillips Brooks' beautiful hymn.

"O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by :
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light ;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

"For Christ is born of Mary ;
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth ;
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

"How silently, how silently,
The wondrous Gift is given !
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming ;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

"O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray ;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day !
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell —
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord, Immanuel."

THE ANNOUNCEMENT FROM HEAVEN OF THE BIRTH OF THE NEW-BORN KING. vs. 8-13. And there were in the same country. In the fields near Bethlehem. Shepherds abiding in the field. The open country, with their flocks. There are no detached farmhouses in Palestine, as with us, but the farmers live in villages, and hence would have to abide in the fields to watch and defend their flocks from thieves and wild beasts and rocky crevasses.

9. And, lo, the ("an," Am. R.) angel of the Lord. And the glory of the Lord. The radiant brightness which in all ages has been the best symbol and manifestation of God's nature, expressing wisdom, love, power, purity, mystery, eternity, omnipresence.

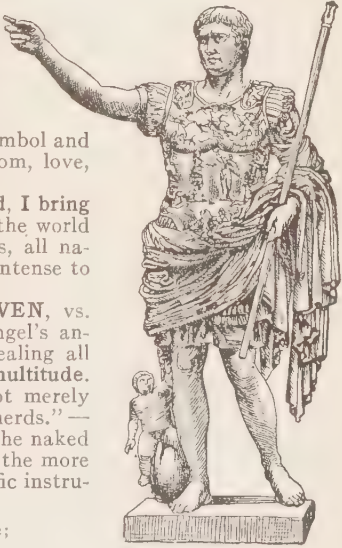
10. And the angel said, Fear not ! for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. The best tidings the world ever heard (see v. 14). To all people of all ages, all nations, all classes, all colors. And the joy is more intense to every one because it is for all.

THE CHORUS OF ANGELS FROM HEAVEN, vs. 13, 14. Suddenly, after waiting for the one angel's announcement, like a cloud breaking away and revealing all the stars of heaven, there was with the angel a multitude. "The whole host of heaven was praising God, not merely that portion of it which was visible to the shepherds." — *Int. Crit. Com.* Just as the 7000 stars visible to the naked eye on the clearest night are but a small portion of the more than 100,000,000 stars visible by means of scientific instruments.

"Hark, hark, my soul, angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields, and ocean's wave-beat shore ;
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more." — *Faber.*

The Song. Gloria in Excelsis. The song consists of two strains, one from the angels praising God ; the other of God toward men.

1. GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST
2. PEACE, GOOD WILL . . TOWARD MEN ON EARTH



Emperor Augustus.

Augustus, the emperor of Rome at the time of the birth of Christ.

14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

First Strain. Glory to God. Glory is the outward expression of the inner light of God's nature, the unveiling of the Father. For the coming of Jesus was the highest expression of God's glory, the fulness of his nature, his love, his goodness, which passed before Moses when he asked to see God's glory.

In the highest heavens, the utmost reach of God's infinite nature and presence among the most exalted intelligences, seraphim and cherubim. It is the noblest song and the brightest glory even there.

In the highest strains. Only the most exquisite music and song are worthy to express this theme.

In the highest degree. The plan of salvation through Jesus Christ so infinitely wise, so infinitely loving, manifests God's glory more than all the measureless constellations or the wonders of creation, "when all the sons of God shouted for joy." For the souls of the saved shall "shine like the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever."

This song was but the prelude and rehearsal for that heavenly song (Rev. 5:13) when the work of Christ is complete, and not only the angels around the throne, but ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of redeemed saints and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, are heard saying, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

Second Strain. On earth peace. Peace with God; peace with nature by a life in harmony with its laws; peace with other men; peace in the individual soul, all its faculties and powers working together in perfect harmony; peace with conscience by forgiven sin; perfect victory over sin which is the destroyer of peace. It includes all the blessings, happiness, and prosperity, which perfect peace makes possible. It includes all that makes heaven be heaven in outward and inward joy. This peace is the fruit of the Gospel in each soul that receives it, and the ultimate result of the Gospel in all the world. And even now the rays of this peace are illuminating the mountain tops of human experience, — the pledge and promise that at length

"Beautiful as songs of the immortals
The holy melodies of peace arise."

"When Peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendor fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing."

Third Strain. Good will toward men. Both Revisions translate, "Peace among men in whom he is well pleased," uniting the second and third strains. In the Greek the difference is simply the letter "s." A number of the best Greek scholars reject the Revised Versions' Greek.

But the greatest objection to the text of the Revised Versions is that the truth then spoken, as it would be naturally understood, has always been a familiar truth. God's love is very much more than "peace among men in whom he is well pleased." God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life*. God desires all men to be saved. What the world needed to know, was that *God had good will toward all men*; that the holy God loved this sinful, rebellious, unworthy world, lying in darkness and the shadow of death, the criminal, the prisoner, the outcast, the degraded, his prodigal wandering children. His forgiving love should be proclaimed everywhere. It should be written on the moral skies in letters of everlasting light.

"Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world:
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wings,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blessed angels sing." — *Sears*.

THE SHEPHERDS FIND THEIR SAVIOUR, vs. 15-20. Let us now go . . . and see. They wisely proceeded to investigate and see if what the angels said was true, and not a dream.

16. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17. And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18. And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

16. **They came with haste.** Showing their zeal and ardor, as well as faith. We can never find the Saviour too soon. **And found** everything just as the angels had told them; and they then knew that the angel's message was true, — the Saviour had come. Their faith and obedience met with a rich reward.

17. **They made known abroad.** Omit *abroad*. They told those in the inn, and all they met, of the wonderful things they had seen and heard in the fields. The news was too good to keep; it belonged to the world. Whosoever has truly found the Saviour burns to "proclaim to all around what a Saviour they have found." See Acts 4:20; 1 John 1:1-3.

18. **All they that heard it wondered.** They were astonished, and then many, doubtless, forgot all about it. They treated the good news as many now treat religion: they are interested in it, but do not seek for it as for hid treasures.

19. **But Mary.** In contrast with these others, **kept all these things** in her memory. They were treasures whose value the following years revealed to her. **Pondered them.** Kept revolving them, comparing them with the promises of the Old Testament, and what had been announced to her.

20. **The shepherds returned.** To their duty as shepherds, but with a new life and blessing in all their daily work. Feeding sheep could never again be commonplace toil to them. After our holiest communion with God, our views from the Pisgahs of life, our insight into the world and heaven on the mounts of transfiguration, we must return to our daily duties, but with a new life in them, a new blessing on them.

HOW SHOULD WE KEEP CHRISTMAS IN OUR DAY?

1. The best of all gifts is to give our hearts to Jesus.

2. It is a custom in the church to which I belong to hold a half-hour meeting early every Christmas morning, which is the best and fullest prayermeeting of the year. (Easter is like unto it.) It abounds in brief expressions of thankfulness for God's gift of his Son.

3. Christmas is especially the children's day. Note what it means to us that the Son of God came into this world a little child.

It shows him to be the children's Saviour.

It has sanctified childhood and motherhood and the home, giving them a new meaning and power, and has shown the importance of childhood in the training of the human race.

It has revealed and emphasized the infinite possibilities in the child.

"Yet sure the babe is in the cradle blest,
Since God himself a baby deigned to be,
And slept upon a mortal mother's breast,
And steeped in baby tears his deity."

4. The wise men of the East when they came to the young Jesus, worshipped him, and gave him gifts, Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh; the most precious things they had, according to the Oriental custom in paying visits to royalty; thus expressing their loyalty. Setting forth greater truths than they knew, they offered to the Son of man and Son of God myrrh, hinting at the resurrection of the dead; the royal gold; and frankincense that breathes prayer.

We need to show our loyalty to our King by giving gifts for his cause, and to help those whom he was accustomed to help.

We give to Jesus by giving to our fellow men, his children, the gifts of every kind he would give if he were here. We are his almoners, his representatives. The very least of us, the very poorest, have this privilege, as Jesus has taught us by "the cup of cold water," and "the widow's two mites."

Contributions for a good cause in the church service do not keep people away. They are simply giving every one, poor or rich, an opportunity to have some part in the world's progress in helping all who are in need. No one need give to all. None need put in more than a penny, if they can do no more. But it is a great privilege to help. It is one of the best trainings in the Christian life. It would be a shame to deny this privilege and training to any one because he is poor. To stop giving would ruin the churches, and they would soon be a neglected factor among the instruments for the progress of mankind.

5. The Sunday School is the best place in which the children can gain the habit of giving.

6. Many Sunday Schools bring their Christmas gifts instead of receiving them, at least a part of the time. But there are also Christmas trees for the younger children, and for the home, with gifts to one another.

7. The plan of using Christmas as a means of expressing good will by means of gifts gives an opportunity for many helpful ways of doing good in the name of Jesus. Christmas cards can be sent everywhere, as reminders of good will. Presents can



The Wise Men of the East.

often be made to the poor, to the sick, the unfortunate, the lonely, without in any way interfering with their self-respect.

The Christmas Spirit all the Year Round. In an editorial from *The Sunday School Times* we find the following wise suggestion: "Two or three years ago, in one of our cities, an Oriental was giving his impression of our American Christmas. He said that for weeks before Christmas people's faces seemed to have an unusual light in them. They were all bright and shining. Everyone seemed unusually kind and courteous. Everyone was more thoughtful, more desirous of giving pleasure than had been his wont. Men who at other seasons of the year had been stern, unapproachable, were now genial, hearty, easy to approach. Those who ordinarily were close, not responding to calls for charity, had become for the time generous and charitable. Those who had been in the habit of doing small and mean things, when they entered the warm Christmas zone, seemed like new men, as if a new spirit possessed them. And the Oriental said it would be a good thing if all the charm of the Christmas spirit could be made to project itself into the new year."

Christmas All the Year Round. We are not studying this lesson on Christmas Day, but the spirit of Christmas is in it. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis in a brilliant article in *The Cosmopolitan*, tells us that "if a visitor from Mars should appear upon our earth, on Christmas Day, he would discover that the golden age had come for at least one day of the year. But the warm beams of good will should encircle the whole year, clothing our earth for twelve months round with all the sweet blossoms of the heart. Strange that reformers have not learned that without any shock of arms or revolution the golden age will come if Christmas will only last all the year through!" The Christmas spirit is the spirit of love expressed in giving, the spirit of making others happy, the spirit of joyful music and song, the spirit of peace and good will.

"For the golden age is coming when Christmas comes to stay through all the year."

"Out of the shadows of the night
The world rolls into light,
It is daybreak everywhere!"

The Best Christmas Gift is to enter into the service of this King; to strive with all our souls to bring all men under his benign sway; to labor and give and pray for the coming of his kingdom in every heart, in every land; to help the poor near at

hand ; to comfort the sorrowing, to join in the support of missions at home and in foreign lands ; to be full of enthusiasm for " education, missions, social service, pure politics, good government, true religion, and a hundred aspects of the Christian ideal."

Let this Christmas feeling last all the year round.

"Rejoice and be glad! the Redeemer has come.
Go look on his cradle, his cross and his tomb.
Rejoice and be glad! for the Lamb that was slain,
O'er earth is triumphant, and liveth again."

"Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

* * * * *

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand:
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

There is no celebration of any holiday that is so appropriate as this of giving in the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE GREATEST EVENT, THE GREATEST ERA, IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD, — THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST INTO THE WORLD.



Market Place, Bethlehem.

"Christmas in lands of the fir and pine,
Christmas in lands of the palm tree and vine:
Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white,
Christmas where cornfields lie sunny and bright,
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night.

"Christmas where children are hopeful and gay,
Christmas where old men are patient and gray,
Christmas where peace, like a dove in its flight,
Broods o'er brave men in the thick of the fight.
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night.

"For the Christ-child who comes is the Master of all:
No palace too great — no cottage too small:
The angels who welcome him sing from the height,
'In the city of David a King in his might'
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night." — *Phillips Brooks.*

LESSON XIII. — December 29.

REVIEW. FAITH'S VICTORIES.

READ: Hebrews 11 : 8-22.

GOLDEN TEXT. *This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.* — 1 JOHN 5 : 4.

NOTE. There are many ways of making a review both interesting and instructive ; and impressing on the scholars' memories the facts, and on their hearts the truths taught during the quarter's lessons.

These lessons lend themselves especially to a review, because there are but few characters presented to us, each one very distinct and vivid with very definite characteristics.

Dr. Cowan, in the *Westminster Teacher*, tells us of "one teacher who made a very decided hit in his class one Sunday by supposing that he was a visitor just arrived from Mars, and proceeding to throw himself upon the mercy of the class for information as to why they were there, and what was the subject of their lesson."

Something of the kind might well be done in this review.

THE BEGINNING OF THE HEBREW NATION. Very early in the story of mankind there came to be two kinds of people on the earth, the Sons of God, who worshipped the Lord, and those who rejected Him and worshipped idols, and "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

At the period studied in this quarter God saw that the time had come to form a peculiar nation who would worship and obey Him, in the midst of idolaters among whom they must dwell ; and the mission of this nation was to teach the idolaters about the true and living God, by word and by example.

THE LAND OF PALESTINE was by far the best place in the whole world in which the new Nation should dwell. *For what reasons was it the best ; and still is the best ?*

How could you reach this land if you would go there ?



Permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Mugheir,

or Ur of the Chaldees, the Home of Abraham.

FIRST. ABRAHAM, THE HERO OF FAITH. Abraham was born in Ur of the Chaldees, nearly 4000 years ago.

To what did God call him ? Why was it an act of heroism and faith to go ? To what country was he sent ?

What great Promises did God give him ? (Gen. 12 : 1-3 ; 12 : 7 ; 13 : 14-17 ; 15 : 1-5 ; 15 : 6 ; 15 : 18 ; 17 : 1-10 ; 17 : 19 ; 21 : 12 ; 22 : 16-18.) What faith did it require to believe in the far distant realization of these Promises ?

Tell the story of Abraham's only recorded war against far greater numbers. Tell the story that proved that Abraham was a man of peace ; and that he was unselfish.

Tell the story of Abraham's failure in faith when he went down into Egypt. Was his saying that Sarah was his sister a falsehood? Tell the story of his prayer for Sodom. How many righteous men would save it? Why? Tell the story of his offering to sacrifice Isaac, and how it came out. Why did it require the largest faith possible? Heb. 11 : 19.

In view of these facts :

What were the chief characteristics of Abraham? Was he worthy to be the ancestor of the Jewish nation? Has there been any better? Can you see a growth, progress, in his life? Are these signs that only by great strivings did he overcome temptation and gain *the victory of faith*?

Lor. Tell the story of Lot. His choosing the best pastures instead of offering them to his uncle Abraham. Pitching his tent toward Sodom. Dwelling in Sodom.



Bedouin Tents such as Abraham may have used.

Vexing "his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." Could he change the character of Sodom? Ought he to have remained there? Destruction of Sodom. *Remember Lot's wife.*

A character sketch of Lot.

ISAAC. Was his willingness to be devoted to God a proof of his faith? *The Lord will provide.* The story of his marriage to Rebekah. The difference between their characters.

A character sketch of Isaac.

The man of one talent. The home-loving man.

JACOB, THE GRANDSON OF ABRAHAM. The contrast between the two brothers. Why Esau sold his birthright. What was it he sold? Was this a fair bargain? Did Jacob know that he was best fitted for the birthright? The story of how Jacob and his mother obtained the birthright. Doing right in a wrong way.

The story of the dream-ladder to heaven. Was this the means of Jacob's conversion? Can you see a change in his life afterwards?

Jacob at the home of Laban. Jacob as a business man : was he too clever and shrewd?

Jacob wrestling with the angel at Peniel. Jacob and Esau reconciled. Jacob's new name.

Name the twelve tribes ; the twelve sons became the twelve tribes.

Reuben	became	Reuben.	Asher	became	Asher.
Simeon	became	Simeon.	Dan	became	Dan.
Levi	became	The Priests.	Naphtali	became	Naphtali.
Judah	became	Judah.	Joseph	became	Ephraim.
Isaacchar	became	Isaacchar.	Benjamin	became	Manasseh.
Zebulon	became	Zebulon.			Benjamin.
Gad	became	Gad.			

JOSEPH. The character of Joseph, as contrasted with his older brothers. What advantages did he have over the others? Joseph the favorite son and its influence.

What two dreams or visions did he have? Was he wise to tell these dreams to the rest of the family? How and when were they fulfilled?

Was it his duty to report to his father the wrong doings of his brothers?

Tell the story of his being sold as a slave. To whom? What was his religious character as a slave? The tragedy of his father. Show God's providence in this bitter experience.

Joseph in prison and what came of it. Show the steps by which he came to be ruler over Egypt next to Pharaoh.

What change for the better had come over the older brothers? Tell the story of how Joseph discovered the penitence of his older brothers and the change in their characters. His welcome to them.



From an old print.

Joseph Sold into Egypt.

What did he do for Egypt as ruler? Why did Jacob and his clan go down to Egypt to live? What part had this in God's providence toward the fulfilling of the Promises to Abraham?

There are some advantages in teaching by the eye as well as by the ear. And several manufactories have produced films for *Motion Pictures* on Bible subjects. One church has used the Motion Picture on "The Trials of Joseph in Egypt" in Sermon and Motion Pictures.

Rev. Harris G. Hale, and Rev. Newton M. Hall, have arranged a series of Biblical Dramas, one of them on *Joseph and His Brethren*, which can be made very effective for a Review. (Pilgrim Press, Boston, 10¢ a copy.)

Written Tests. "Written tests are so generally used in the public schools nowadays that the children are familiar with them and will be quite at their ease if asked to work out a review lesson in this way now and then.

"Announcement should be made two or three weeks in advance that twelve questions, not too hard, one for every lesson, will be put on the blackboard to be answered in writing by the pupils, and that their papers marked for percentage will be returned

the following Sunday. Providing a special set of questions for each grade is the best way.

"This method will do its best work if something in the way of noting results before the whole school is provided for, by means of blackboard, or note-books."

The Picture-Gallery. A review may also be conducted by means of a series of pictures of the leading events.

Not a few photographs can be obtained of great pictures by old masters, to show a class.

Or stereopticon pictures can be obtained and a most interesting and profitable evening be given to the review by means of these pictures or in the school-hour with darkened windows.

The Reflector-scope is especially effective because almost any moderate sized pictures can be used. There are more than 5000 penny pictures published. W. A. Wilde Co. have many very excellent ones. (Boston, 120 Boylston St.)

INDEX.

SUBJECT.	PAGE.
"A beam from heaven is sent to cheer".....	79
Abou ben Adhem.....	165
ABRAHAM GIVING ISAAC TO GOD.....	298
Abraham yields to temptation, but gains the vic- tory.....	293
ABRAM HELPING LOT.....	291
ABRAM LEAVING HOME.....	286
Abram, the hero of faith.....	287
"A finger's breadth at hand may mar".....	150
African girl's pitcher.....	202
Alabaster box of ointment.....	171
Alcohol <i>versus</i> people.....	133
Alcott and the load of wood.....	260
"All honor the men who are willing to sink".....	288
"All the church in the Sunday School".....	53
Ambition.....	148
Ambition of James and John.....	145
"An angel paused in his onward flight".....	155
"And as of old by two and two".....	59
Angels in the kitchen.....	310
Angels' obedience.....	222
Anger and thorns.....	251
"Another of those splendors".....	125
Answer to prayer.....	217
"A plague upon the people fell".....	300
Appearances of our Lord after his Resurrection.....	100
APPETITE AND GREED.....	311
Armies of the world and of Christ.....	275
"Around our life-time golden ladders rise".....	325
Ascension of Jesus.....	194
"As soldiers in life's battle, Lord".....	333
"At even, ere the sun was set".....	35
"At last a voice all still and small".....	126
"At the heart of the cyclone tearing the sky".....	282
"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour".....	102
Bad bargains.....	179
Banquet of the wise.....	172
Barrels and the incandescent light.....	268
Barren fig tree, The.....	157
Bartimæus, The blind.....	149
"Beautiful hands are they that do".....	149
Because he anointed me to preach.....	89
Beggar and the grain of corn.....	260
BEGINNING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.....	198
"Be kindly prodigal of time".....	257
Bengel's rule for Bible study.....	211
"Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow".....	338
Better engines and hotter fires.....	157
Bible hints on helpfulness.....	240
Bible Hunt Review.....	285
Bible light on Bible reading.....	209
Bible light on prayer.....	216
Bible of St. Mark, The.....	31
Bible promises to givers.....	459
BIRTH OF JESUS, THE.....	356
Birthright, Rebekah's scheme concerning the.....	318
Black coal in sunshine (Ill.).....	19
Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.....	248
"Blest is the man of high ideals".....	288
"Blind Bartimæus at the gate".....	151
Bohler's conversion and confession.....	248
Bowen's conversion.....	225
Boy born blind.....	150
Braid drum enlarged.....	321
Bridges all the way.....	285
Brotherhood in the church.....	244
Brotherhood of St. Andrew.....	28
"Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel".....	178
Bunyan's Pliable.....	66

SUBJECT.	PAGE.
"But when their tales were done".....	185
"By any way, however rough it be".....	42
Called from play for a gift.....	279
Calming the tempest.....	76
Carrie Nation Home fails for lack of inmates.....	314
Challenge to Boston voters on Temperance.....	316
Chapel of the Hermits (Whittier).....	291
Chart Review.....	283, 284
Cheerful giver (Ill.).....	101
Chess game with a terrible stake.....	269
Children's hosannas.....	155
Child's Temperance Pledge.....	134
Chorus of odors from Mary's flask.....	172
Chorus of the angels.....	359
Christian and Hopeful welcomed to Heaven.....	304
CHRISTIAN GIVING.....	254
Christian service: its cost and rewards.....	143
Christian union.....	245
"Christmas in lands of fir and pine".....	363
CHRISTMAS LESSON.....	356
Christmas spirit all the year round.....	362
Christopher Wren and swearing.....	249
Christ's method of training the Twelve.....	91
Christ's resurrection an assurance of immortality.....	193
Church attendance.....	245
Church, The modern, at work.....	95
Cleansing the temple.....	156
"Closer is the Lord's protection".....	213
"Closer to us than breathing".....	104
Coachman who was hired.....	207
Cole's voyage of life.....	79
"Come, O thou traveler unknown".....	332
Commandments, The two great.....	162
CONQUERING EVIL.....	263
Conversion of Jacob.....	327
Corn-club boys of Ohio.....	37
Costly prayers.....	276
Courteous speech.....	253
Cross-bearer, Story of the.....	120
Crossing-sweeper's obedience.....	221
"Crossing the Bar" (Tennyson).....	72
Cross, The (Poem).....	167
Cruelty a kindness.....	303
Dante's Purgatorio, four steps to repentance.....	45
Deacon Giles' Distillery.....	133
Deacon's Week.....	148
"Dead is the hand that is not open wide".....	237
Demoniac girl healed.....	210
Demoniac in Capernaum synagogue.....	34
Demoniac of Gadara.....	80
Destruction of the cities of the plain.....	297
Dorothea Dix's helpfulness.....	239
Defilement of sin, Jesus frees us from.....	111
Dreams of Pharaoh interpreted.....	346
Drinking to make one work.....	231
Duty, The modern Christian's.....	164
Easter morning, Story of the first.....	189
"Envy will merit as its shade pursue".....	338
Ephraim Oath.....	120
Esau sells his birthright.....	312
Eternal life, Seeking to inherit.....	138
Ethiopian treasurer converted.....	203
Evangelist and the infidel, The.....	95
Expectation Corner (Ill.).....	326
"Eyes and no eyes".....	159
Fable of the kite (Ill.).....	351
FAITH'S VICTORIES: REVIEW.....	364

INDEX.

SUBJECT.	PAGE.	SUBJECT.	PAGE.
Faith-touch and world-touch.....	86	"I may not stay to see the day"	195
Family, The ideal.....	309	In a tunnel (Ill.).....	351
Famines in Egypt.....	346	Ink becoming less black (Ill.).....	144
Favorite son, The.....	335	"In some way or other the Lord will provide"	302
Feeling good and making good.....	243	"In youth, beside the lonely sea".....	338
Fish became blind, How.....	71	"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan".....	346
Fishers of men.....	28	Iphigenia.....	300
Fishing, Three rules for.....	29	ISAAC AND REBEKAH.....	305
"Five things observe with care".....	224	"I said 'Let me walk in the fields'".....	223
Florence Nightingale's obedience.....	22	"I sat alone with my conscience".....	41
Flower bought for \$40,000.....	257	"I saw a smile to a poor man".....	96
"Flower in the crannied wall".....	72	"I see the crowd in Pilate's hall".....	182
Forgiveness of sin.....	75	"I steadier step when I recall".....	232
"For he led us, he said, to a joyous land".....	68	"I stood on the shore beside the sea".....	318
Foreign missions, Story of.....	73	"I talked to-day with you all three".....	321
"For I dipt into the future far as human eye".....	195	"I think when I read that sweet story".....	142
For, Clavigera, Ruskin.....	91	"It is not the deed we do".....	172
Freely ye have received, freely give.....	94	"It may be glorious to write".....	251
French call to Arabia.....	111	"I want to be an angel" (Ill.).....	336
FRUITS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.....	277	"I wish there were some wonderful place".....	323
Fun to be a missionary.....	281	"I would ride the camel".....	142
Gathering up the fragments.....	103	Jacob as a business man.....	330
General Howard's good medicine.....	207	JACOB DECEIVES HIS FATHER.....	316
Gift, Measure of the.....	160	JACOB FLEEING FROM HIS ANGRY BROTHER.....	322
Gifts on the altar.....	262	Jacob meets Rachel.....	329
Gifts to philanthropies and missions.....	258	Jacob's first experience at Haran.....	329
"Give as you would if an angel".....	257	Jacobs in modern history.....	317
Giver, A cheerful.....	161	JACOB WINS ESAU.....	338
Giving for fun.....	259	Jacob wrestling with the angel.....	331
Giving the best.....	258	Jairus and his young daughter.....	84
Giving while there is a chance.....	258	Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide.....	302
Gladstone on the Bible.....	208	Jericho road.....	234
God never gives men up.....	239	Jesus alone with God in prayer.....	36
Gordon's monument.....	309	Jesus asleep in the storm.....	78
Gospel for the poor.....	33	Jesus at the Bethany supper.....	170
Grapes under various names.....	240	JESUS AT WORK.....	30
Greater works than Jesus did.....	36	Jesus baptized by John.....	21
GROWING STRONGER.....	236	JESUS BEGINS HIS WORK.....	22
Growth according to the Bible.....	231	JESUS BRINGING PEACE.....	75
"Habit" by Prof. James.....	65	"Jesus calls us o'er the tumult".....	226
"Had I but heard one breath".....	172	JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE.....	53
Hamlin's seven cents.....	262	JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER AND LORD: RE- VIEW.....	195
Hammurabi and Abraham's time.....	287	"Jesus Christ's man".....	275
Handel's "Messiah".....	272	Jesus crosses the lake with his disciples.....	98
"Hands Off" (Ill.).....	341	JESUS EXERCISING KINGLY AUTHORITY.....	151
Happiness can be cultivated.....	282	JESUS FACES BETRAYAL AND DENIAL.....	173
"Happiness makes happiness".....	279	JESUS FACES THE CROSS.....	144
Happy, How a prince was made.....	30	JESUS FORGIVING SIN.....	37
Happy in the prosperity of the evil.....	282	Jesus gives freedom.....	110
"Hark, hark, my soul".....	359	Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.....	177
"Have we seen her, the new city".....	195	Jesus Lord of the Sabbath.....	46
Healing in the East.....	135	Jesus' method of treating faults.....	57
"He couldn't sing and he couldn't play".....	30	JESUS MINISTERING TO THE MULTITUDE.....	96
HELPING OTHERS.....	233	JESUS ON THE CROSS.....	180
Helping with the arm, not the heart.....	234	JESUS OUR EXAMPLE IN SERVICE: REVIEW.....	104
"Help whomever, whenever you can".....	237	Jesus preaching in the synagogue.....	32
"He that turneth from the road to rescue another".....	236	JESUS REBUKES SELFISHNESS.....	133
Hesperides, Garden of the.....	310	JESUS REQUIRES CONFESSION AND LOYALTY.....	115
"His life was gentle, and the elements".....	182	JESUS RESTORING LIFE AND HEALTH.....	83
Hittite stone (Ill.).....	154	JESUS SENDING FORTH THE TWELVE.....	90
Homer's Odyssey.....	75	JESUS SETS MEN FREE.....	108
Housekeeping and religion.....	251	JESUS SETS NEW STANDARDS OF LIVING.....	137
Houses in the East.....	30	JESUS SILENCES HIS ADVERSARIES.....	159
"How like a mounting devil in the heart".....	148	JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES: FOUR KINDS OF GROUND.....	62
"How sad 'twould be to see a master's hand".....	250	JESUS TEACHING BY PARABLES: THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM.....	69
How should we keep Christmas.....	361	Jesus the Bread of Life.....	104
"I am heir and this my kingdom".....	81	Jesus the promised Messiah.....	116
"I asked the roses as they grew".....	92	Jesus the revealer of God.....	15
"I ask no heaven till earth be thine".....	148	JESUS TRANSFIGURED.....	122
"I do not ask to see the distant".....	289	Jesus' trial before Pilate.....	181
"If God is wise and kind" said she.....	207	JESUS TRIUMPHANT OVER DEATH.....	187
"If only myself could talk to myself".....	323	JESUS WARNS AND COMFORTS HIS FRIENDS.....	166
"If only we strive to be pure and true".....	24	Jesus washing his disciples' feet.....	175
If true we are lost: — we are saved.....	207	JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS.....	13
"If the dear Lord should send an angel down".....	175	John the Baptist preparing the way.....	16
"If we of later times have lost".....	247	John, The preaching of.....	18
"I know not the way I am going".....	289	Joseph's dreams and visions.....	337
"I know not where his islands lift".....	79	JOSEPH FORGIVES HIS BROTHERS.....	349
Imagination in teaching.....	42	JOSEPH MADE RULER OF EGYPT.....	342

INDEX.

SUBJECT.	PAGE.	SUBJECT.	PAGE.
Joseph's experiences in Egypt.....	344	Paralytic borne of four.....	39
JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS.....	344	Paralytic: thy sins be forgiven.....	43
Judas betrays his Master.....	178	Passover feast.....	174
Judson's prayer answered.....	413	Past Redemption Point.....	207
"Just as I am, without one plea"	187	Payson's dying experiences.....	194
"Keen and intense life's race"	234	Pentecosts to-day.....	241
"Keep your soul on top"	51	People vs. alcohol.....	133
Kingdom in the home.....	230	Peter and Andrew, Portraits of.....	56
Knights of King Arthur.....	101	Peter's three denials of his Lord.....	179
Knox's pulpit and Bannockburn.....	243	Peter's wife's mother healed.....	34
Korean Christians.....	242	Pictures Disclosed Review.....	283
Ladder of St. Augustine.....	328	Pied Piper of Hamelin. (III.).....	68
Lad with loaves and fishes.....	100	Pliable and Christian in Slough of Despond.....	66
Lambs in the fold. (III.).....	141	Prayer and electricity.....	218
Latimer and the clerk.....	253	Prayer and praise.....	219
"Learn from yon Orient shell to love thy foe".....	355	Prayer as communion with God.....	332
"Life is the tuning time".....	230	"Pray 'Lead us into no such temptations'".....	27
Livingstone's servant.....	250	"Pray through".....	215
Loch Katrine cleansing Glasgow.....	149	Present Day Applications Review.....	284
"Look into your mother's eyes".....	141	Prisons in the East.....	202
"Lord, I beseech that I may teach".....	251	Prodigal son repenting.....	43
Lord's Prayer, The.....	211	Promises to Abraham.....	289, 299
Lord's Supper, Institution of.....	170	Proof of resurrection of Jesus.....	193
Lot and the destruction of Sodom.....	200	"Push on and make the toil intense".....	283
Love shown by obedience.....	224	Railroad map of Palestine.....	107
Luther at the Diet of Worms.....	18	Rappacini's daughter.....	295
Lydia and her conversion.....	201	READING GOD'S WORD.....	205
Lying and liars.....	341	Refusal, The great.....	139
Macgregor on prayer.....	213	"Rejoice and be glad".....	303
Mackay's call.....	204	Religious Sabbath a necessity.....	51
McAll's two French sentences.....	200	Resurrection of Jesus.....	190
Magic skin, The.....	134	REVIEW.....	104, 195, 283, 364
Making Jesus King.....	200	Righteous, Unconscious goodness of the.....	73
Man of one talent.....	307	"Ring out the old, ring in the new".....	303
Marine Glaucus.....	50	Roots and Fruits Review.....	285
"Master, the tempest is raging".....	80	Ruskin on Hesperides Garden.....	310
"Material that is sent up".....	201	Ruskin on selfishness.....	132
Medical missions and missionary schools.....	89	Ruskin's complaint in his later life.....	304
Michelangelo's statute of David.....	329	Sabbath keeping by Jesus and his disciples.....	48
Miracle of the loaves and fishes.....	102	Sabbath laws.....	50
Missionary giving illustrated by a chart.....	273	Sadducees and the resurrection.....	163
Missionary progress.....	270	"Said Christ our Lord, 'I will go and see'".....	296
"Moorish palace" mirrors.....	281	"St. Augustine, well hast thou said".....	328
"More to follow".....	237	St. George and the dragon. (III.).....	27
Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration.....	125	St. Thomas and King Gondophorus.....	60
Naboth and his vineyard.....	205	Salaries of ministers.....	238
Nails in the gate post. (III.).....	19	Samaritans.....	235
Nearer Christ, nearer each other.....	176	Savonarola and the Bonfire of Vanities.....	112
Negro's reasons for church going.....	228	Scenes around the cross.....	183
"Never by lapse of time".....	233	Scourging Jesus.....	270
Newsboy taught to help himself.....	255	Scout law.....	101
Obedient Alpine guide.....	222	Seed growing secretly.....	72
OBEYING GOD.....	219	Seed sowed by the wayside.....	66
Obeying his mother.....	111	Seed sowed on stony ground.....	66
"O could we do with this world of ours".....	309	Self-denial.....	119
"Of all things far I love the best".....	355	"Set your sail to the heavenly gale".....	328
"O friend, we need not rock or sand".....	291	Seven fears changed to seven joys.....	349
"O golden day so long desired".....	129	Seven Words from the Cross.....	183-186
"O little town of Bethlehem".....	359	"She is not dead, the child of our affection".....	88
"O my offence is rank".....	352	"She would have them lifted high".....	147
"Once I was pure as the snow".....	14	Sick ship.....	265
"Once to every man and nation".....	160	Simon's new name.....	199
"One ship drives East another".....	27	Skitzlanders.....	71
"Only five barley loaves".....	101	Slander book.....	253
Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed.....	101	Sleeping Child. (Mrs. Browning).....	88
Organization in the church.....	244	Sleeping in church.....	228
Oriental house in Palestine.....	39	Slime pits of Sodom.....	298
"O think of a true word, a good word".....	202	"So I go on not knowing".....	289
"Out of the shadow of the night".....	362	Song cure in the home.....	310
"O young mariner".....	348	"Son of heaven and earth".....	222
Painting the pump. (III.).....	19	"So when my Saviour calls I rise".....	208
Palestine the Promised Land.....	105	"So when two work together".....	93
Palestine, Modern facts concerning.....	105	SPEAKING FOR CHRIST.....	247
Palestine the training school of God.....	289	Spectrum of love.....	165
Parable of the lamp.....	70	Spurgeon's experience with child converts.....	142
Parable of the mustard seed.....	74	Spurgeon's weathercock — God is Love.....	187
Parable of the sower.....	64	Stephen Girard, A story of.....	52
		Steps in the stairway of happiness.....	279
		"Still through the cloven skies they come".....	360
		Stokes on the interesting life.....	279
		Stone of warning.....	268

INDEX.

SUBJECT.	PAGE.	SUBJECT.	PAGE.
Stones crying out.....	154	"'Twas seedtime when he blessed the bread".....	102
"Straight a fiery globe of angels".....	26	Twelve apostles, A portrait gallery.....	55
Strength from the church.....	228	Two by two, Going forth by.....	93
Sunday as a day of rest.....	51	Unreconciledly happy.....	282
"Sunset and evening star".....	80	Vanderkemp's conversion.....	272
Swearing and its folly.....	249	Victoria and the umbrella.....	201
Swearing in Greek.....	249	Victoria Cross and beer.....	233
"Sweet hour of prayer".....	111	"Victorious deeds flamed in my heart".....	25
Sydney Smith's two oxen.....	242	Vision and service: epileptic boy.....	130
Syrophœnician woman.....	112	Vision of the golden stairway to heaven.....	324
Taking up the cross.....	119	Visions of the future.....	167
Talents and their value.....	278	Voice of God: This is my beloved Son.....	25
Tapestry-weavers. (Ill.).....	349	Voyage of life.....	79
TEMPERANCE SUNDAY, WORLD'S.....	311	Wandering son and a father's love.....	44
Temperance as a military measure.....	232	Warning to boys against selling their birthrights.....	314
Temperance Pledge, Child's.....	134	Washing India's feet.....	274
Temperance, the soil of endurance.....	277	Watching flowers grow.....	72
Temptation of Jesus.....	23	"Watchman, tell us of the night".....	168
Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar".....	79	"We all might do good".....	164
Tennyson's "The Victim".....	300	"We are not worst at once".....	61
Ten Times One Are Ten.....	29	Weathercock, God is Love.....	187
Testing of Joseph, The.....	351	"We barker life for pottage".....	314
Test of Gyges' ring. (Ill.).....	36	"We give thee thanks, O Lord".....	230
"That thou art blamed shalt not be thy defect".....	338	Wellington on obedience.....	221
"The boat that bore the Master".....	84	"We ourselves, when we commit a sin".....	24
"The boneless tongue, so small and weak".....	252	"We rise by things that are under our feet".....	325
"The careless word let fall to-day".....	221	"We search the world for truths".....	206
"The common thing, the common clay".....	57	"We shape ourselves the joy or fear".....	279
"The cross on Golgotha will never save thy soul".....	269	Wesley and his pictures.....	204
"The drunkards will never be dead".....	315	Wesley and the Bible.....	206
"The golden palace of my God".....	79	Wesley's sermon on giving.....	259
"The harvest truly is plenteous".....	92	"What has your belief done for you?".....	282
"The healing of his seamless dress".....	86	WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN: REVIEW.....	283
"The mighty pyramids of stone".....	328	"What means this eager, anxious throng".....	146
"The morning sun rose bright and clear".....	301	"When by the dreadful tempest borne".....	79
"The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed".....	218	"When the fight begins within".....	27
"There are who like the seer of old".....	345	"Where every tear had fallen".....	349
"There's a fleck of rust on a flawless blade".....	293	White paper from foul rags.....	251
"These things keep meekly hid".....	238	"Who shall preserve thee, beautiful child".....	79
"The warning was spoken, the righteous had gone".....	208	Wider work of Christian churches.....	36
"Think gently of the erring one".....	21	Widow's mite.....	262
"This is the glorious goal".....	212	William Tell: "the land of liberty".....	109
"Those Holy Fields".....	105	Will, A peculiar.....	143
"Thou too sail on, O ship of State".....	80	"Will you walk into my parlor".....	316
"Thus oft it haps that when within".....	157	WINNING THE WORLD TO CHRIST.....	270
"Thus speaketh Christ our Lord to us".....	224	Wireless messages.....	15
"Thus with something of the seer".....	351	Wise men from the East.....	361
"Thy neighbor? It is he whom thou".....	235	"With myrrh and with aloes".....	191
"'Tis life whereof our nerves are".....	104	Witness-bearing on mission fields.....	249
"'Tis wonderful, and yet my boy".....	79	Witnesses of the Transfiguration.....	127
Titbottom's spectacles, Mr.....	150	Woodrow Wilson on the Bible.....	209
Tithes.....	127	WORKING IN THE CHURCH.....	240
Tithing, and what it would do.....	257	World is growing better.....	143
Tobacco using and college rank.....	315	WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY.....	311
Tongs and a snapping tongue.....	251	Wrestling in prayer.....	331
Training of the Twelve.....	91	Wrought into gold (Poem).....	96
Transferred. (Ill.).....	304	Xanthus's feasts.....	252
Traps for the young.....	237	Years of plenty in Egypt, Cause.....	348
Tree of character.....	281	"Yet sure the babe in the cradle is blest".....	361
Tribulation, Vision of the great.....	168	"You ask me how I gave my heart to Christ?".....	202
Tribute to Caesar, Is it lawful.....	162	"You may grind them both in the selfsame mill".....	315
Triumphal procession down the ages.....	154		
Triumphal procession of Jesus.....	153		
"Tune me, O Lord, into one harmony".....	221		

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